

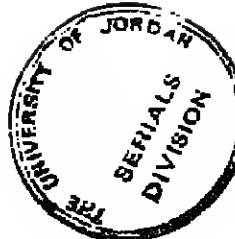
Grenade attack wounds 3 Palestinians

BETHLEHEM, occupied West Bank (AFP) — Two grenades lobbed at an Israeli bus missed and wounded three Palestinians on the occupied West Bank Friday, an army spokesman said. One of the grenades exploded on a shop front causing the wounds, the spokesman said, adding that the attackers had not been identified. Palestinian sources said a grenade had been lobbed from a car wounding four Palestinians near Bethlehem. They suspected Jewish extremists. Palestinian witnesses said they saw settlers throw a grenade. The injured were taken to hospital at the nearby town of Beil Jala where their wounds were described as "moderately serious." The army sealed off the area. Four 17-year-old members of an anti-Arab group are in custody awaiting trial for a grenade attack in the Old City's Muslim quarter last November which left an Arab merchant dead and 12 injured. Three of the group from Kahane Haim, a splinter of the Kach party, named after founder Rabbi Meir Kahane, who was killed in New York in November 1990, have confessed, police say.



Jordan Times

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Russian envoy arrives in Amman

AMMAN (J.T.) — A senior Russian diplomat arrived here Friday to try to narrow differences that have stalled the Arab-Israeli peace process. The visit of Viktor Posuvalyuk, head of the Foreign Ministry's Department for Africa and the Middle East, comes in advance of a scheduled trip next week by U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher. Mr. Posuvalyuk arrived here from Syria. Mr. Posuvalyuk also is to visit Lebanon and Tunisia, where he will meet with leaders of the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO).

Kurds say they may free tourists

ANKARA (R) — A rebel Kurdish leader told a Turkish journalist Friday he believed six Western tourists would be freed after relatives appealed for their release. "We have nothing against these people. We are considering the appeal in a very positive way and we hope to be giving them a very positive reply," a Kurdish Labour Party (PKK) official told a reporter for the English-language Turkish Daily News. Cemil Bayik, chairman of the PKK's military council, was speaking after the reporter, Ismet Ismet, banded him messages from relatives of the four Frenchmen, one Briton and one Australian kidnapped in southeast Turkey this month.

Ciampi expects elections in 1994

ROME (R) — Prime Minister Carlo Azeglio Ciampi said Friday crisis-hit Italy would have early general elections next year, according to remarks reported in Italian media. "I think the country will have elections after the budget for 1994 has been approved, so it will be in the new year," Mr. Ciampi told Italian reporters during a visit to Paris to meet French Premier Edouard Balladur. "We will see later in which month of 1994," he added. Former Bank of Italy Governor Ciampi took over as prime minister last April and was seen as a neutral figure to lead the country pending the scrapping of the proportional representation voting system, as demanded by Italians in a referendum.

16 survive plane crash in Malaysia

KUALA LUMPUR (R) — Sixteen people returning from a religious gathering survived when their plane crashed in Malaysia's Sarawak state on Borneo Island Friday, an official said. One person died when the British-made Shorts Skyvan crashed after a failed emergency landing deep in the jungle. "We don't know yet why the plane tried to land... it could be due to bad weather or shortage of fuel," said Abdul Rahim Abdullah, medical officer at Miri general hospital.

Foreign doctors leave Iran

NICOSIA (R) — A total of 1,400 foreign doctors working in Iran have left since March when it sharply devalued its currency, Tehran Radio reported Friday. Quoting an unnamed deputy health minister, it said the devaluation — which greatly reduced the dollar equivalent of the doctors' salaries paid in rials — and the increase in the number of Iranians finishing medical schools led to the exodus. He said 1,400 had left but did not say how many remained. According to Health Ministry figures, 2,700 foreign doctors worked in Iran in the year to March 1992. Most were from the Indian subcontinent and worked in villages and small towns.

Demjanjuk to seek asylum in Ukraine

TEL AVIV (AP) — John Demjanjuk will seek asylum in his native Ukraine within days unless the United States allows him to return, a Ukrainian embassy official said Friday. The statesless Demjanjuk is awaiting deportation from Israel after the supreme court on Thursday overturned his conviction and death penalty as the Nazi guard "Ivan the terrible" (see page 2).

Casualties rise as Israel continues attacks

No response to Hizbollah offer

Combined agency dispatches

ISRAELI FORCES shelled South Lebanon without letup for the sixth day Friday as the Beirut government tried to cope with the influx of refugees fleeing the region.

Radio stations blared appeals from hospitals for urgent donations of blood and medical supplies as Arab foreign ministers convened in Damascus to seek an end to the violence.

Police said 17 people were killed and 47 wounded in Friday's hostilities.

The Israeli offensive, which started Sunday, has killed at least 117 people, wounded 487 and forced a half million people to evacuate 80 towns and villages targeted by Israel.

Israel gave no signs of relenting in the war despite a conditional offer from the Hizbollah group for a ceasefire.

Military radio reported after an emergency cabinet session in the defence ministry at Tel Aviv that "operation accountability" was continuing.

Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin had spoken to U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher during the meeting, the radio said, but gave no details.

After six days of intensive air, naval and artillery bombardments of guerrillas in Lebanon, Hizbollah chief Hassan Nasrallah said he was ready to halt rocket attacks on Israel if Israel stopped its onslaught.

"An end to the rocket attacks against Jewish settlements could only be possible if there were a total and permanent end to Israeli attack and barbaric bombardment on the people," of southern Lebanon, he said in a statement.

Before the cabinet meeting, Foreign Minister Shimon Peres told reporters: "As soon as Hizbollah..."

(Continued on page 10)



Two men lift an injured man onto a stretcher for transport to a hospital in the village of Jonyeh, southern Lebanon (AFP photo)

Arabs to call for Security Council action on Lebanon

Combined agency dispatches

DAMASCUS — Egyptian Foreign Minister Amr Musa called for Arab unity on Friday to deal with Israel's fierce offensive in Lebanon and to save the Middle East peace process.

His remarks came as foreign ministers from the 21-nation Arab League began a meeting to discuss how to end the violence.

Sources close to the meeting, speaking on condition of anonymity, said the ministers probably would call on the U.N. Security Council to discuss Israel's attacks and to urge the Jewish state to withdraw from South Lebanon.

Mr. Musa told reporters at Damascus airport that "it is necessary to discuss Arab solidarity, the peace process and its continuation and Arab strategy because we are seeking to retrieve Arab land through negotiations that both Arabs and Israel have agreed on."

He added: "That is the essence of the position that should continue until we obtain Arab land and rights."

Lebanese Foreign Minister Fares Bouze said he would demand an Arab condemnation of Israel, an immediate Israeli ceasefire, unconditional return of the 500,000 people driven from their homes and Arab aid for the refugees.

Seven of the Arab League's 21 members are represented by their foreign ministers, the others at lower level, diplomats said.

Those attending included the foreign ministers from Syria, Lebanon and Egypt plus Lebanese Prime Minister Rafik Hariri.

Syrian Foreign Minister Farouk Al Sharaa has said that his country was not prepared to continue negotiations "under the threat of Israeli guns."

A number of other Arab leaders have also warned that Israel's offensive could kill the peace negotiations, which involve de-

(Continued on page 10)

Israeli actions have to stop immediately — King

French leaders pay tribute to Jordan; pledge continued support

PARIS (Agencies) — Israel's military actions against South Lebanon "have to stop as soon as possible in order to save another possible casualty, which may be the peace process," His Majesty King Hussein said here on Friday.

After talks with President Francois Mitterrand on Thursday evening, the King said he was "very distressed and very disturbed" by the Israeli bombing of South Lebanon villages, warning that it jeopardised efforts to achieve a comprehensive peace in the region. "This is not the way, this is risking everything."

"I'm very distressed and disturbed by what is happening. I believe this is a very serious thing," he told reporters after meeting President Mitterrand. "I hope and pray this can be brought to a halt as soon as possible, immediately, because we don't want to have another victim, that is the efforts... for the sake of achieving a comprehensive peace."

The King also had brief talks with Foreign Minister Alain Juppe.

The King, who arrived here on Thursday for a private visit, had talks on Friday morning with Prime Minister Edouard Balladur in a Paris hotel.

Mr. Balladur said they had a "very free and open" conversation, during which they discussed the Middle East and Bosnia-Herzegovina.

On Bosnia, Mr. Balladur restated France's position against a



His Majesty King Hussein is received by French Prime Minister Edouard Balladur Friday (AFP photo)

lifting of the embargo on arms and opposition to any bombing except to protect U.N.-declared safe zones.

Mr. Balladur said he had told King Hussein during their 40-minute meeting that he "can count on us whenever possible to ensure prosperity, progress and

peace for the Jordanian people." Mr. Balladur voiced France's appreciation for King Hussein's leadership and his efforts in supporting the Middle East peace process and protecting regional security and stability.

(Continued on page 10)

Error could have caused latest U.S. attack in south Iraq

WASHINGTON (Agencies) — U.S. Navy pilots may have mistaken ground radar for more deadly tracking radar when they fired on two suspected missile sites in the "no-fly" zone over southern Iraq, a senior Pentagon official says.

The comments of the official, who requested anonymity, followed a report in Friday's New York Times quoting an unnamed administration official as saying that pilots had indeed made an error of judgement.

Two U.S. navy EA-6B prowler aircraft fired an anti-radiation Harrier missile each at suspected Iraqi missile sites after being illuminated by radar while patrolling an area approximately 130 kilometres south of the 32nd Parallel. The attacks occurred two hours apart earlier Thursday.

U.S. officials had no news yet on the damage caused by the attacks after both aircraft returned safely to the carrier USS Abraham Lincoln, which is on patrol in the Gulf.

Baghdad later denied the attacks, calling the report part of a plot to draw public opinion away from Israel's onslaught on South Lebanon, which has claimed more than 110 lives since Sunday.

"We find no explanation for such a strange statement by the American Defence Department," an official spokesman said in a statement handed to foreign journalists in Baghdad.

"No radar site in the southern region was attacked and no sound of explosions was heard," the spokesman said.

"Iraq categorically denies what has been announced by the Pentagon that two U.S. planes fired today's afternoon two missiles at radar sites in the southern region of Iraq," the spokesman said.

Last Sunday Iraq said U.S. pilots must have been hallucinating when they reported earlier

brushes with Iraqi missile units. "Quarters in the American administration want to derail world public opinion from the crimes being perpetrated by Israel in Lebanon for the past five days," the spokesman said, referring to Israel's bombardment of South Lebanon.

Both of Iraq's statement during the last week, denying U.S. reports of planes being tracked by radar, have been mild and have avoided the fiery language usually employed during similar incidents in the past.

The Pentagon official said the pilots apparently believed they had been illuminated by tracking radar, a preparatory step to being fired upon, when the radar signals could have come from an unthreatening surface search radar.

"They were lit up and thought they were being aimed at," the senior official said.

The official said that U.S. pilots throughout the Gulf region were being warned to be more careful in distinguishing the two types of radar.

The USS Abraham Lincoln, he said, had just arrived in the Gulf.

Thursday's incident came only four days after an Air Force F-4G "Wild Weasel" flying in Iraq's southern zone fired a missile at a site after Iraqi radar locked onto the plane.

President Bill Clinton quickly played down the second and third such incidents within a week in southern Iraq.

"There is nothing out of the ordinary about what happened. It was not part of any new initiative," the president told reporters when asked about the incident at the White House.

"It was part of the old understanding under which our planes operate in that area," he added of the so-called rules of engagement involving American warplanes since a U.S.-led coalition drove Iraqi forces from Kuwait in the 1991 Gulf war.



Some of the last remaining inhabitants of Jebshit, near Nabatiyeh, assist a man during a lull in heavy shelling and bombing of the village, trying to move him into a shelter (AFP photo)

Bosnians reach agreement on dividing republic — mediators

Combined agency dispatches

GENEVA — Bosnia's warring factions agreed Friday on constitutional principles for a new Bosnian state made up of three republics, international mediators said.

But the mediators, Lord Owen and Thorvald Stoltenberg, said negotiations would continue Saturday on the specifics of the peace plan, notably on a map dividing the country and ceasefire arrangements.

"After intensive discussion on a number of drafts, with amendments agreed by all three parties, there is now a constitutional agreement for the union of republics of Bosnia and Herzegovina which will form part of an overall peace settlement," mediators Owen and Stoltenberg said in a statement released by their spokesman, John Mills.

Bosnian President Alija Izetbegovic left the meeting without comment. However, it seemed he had finally given in to intense pressure from mediators and Serbs and Croats to agree to a three-way ethnic partition of the former Yugoslav republic.

Mr. Izetbegovic, who had wanted a single, multi-ethnic re-

public, said earlier that he could not accept a draft plan by the international mediators. (see p 8)

The mediators said the draft had been amended. But it was unlikely the amendments would have been significant, given the strength of the Serbs and Croats at the negotiating table and on the battlefield.

Croatian President Franjo Tudjman said an overall agreement would be signed Sunday or Monday.

Mr. Tudjman and his counterparts from the rump Yugoslavia — Slobodan Milosevic of Serbia and Momir Bulatovic of Montenegro — planned to leave Geneva Friday evening but will return if needed, the mediators said.

The leaders of the Bosnian delegations — President Izetbegovic, Mate Boban of the Bosnian Croats and Radovan Karadzic of the Bosnian Serbs — will continue talks on annexes to the agreement, specifically on a human rights court, Mr. Mills said.

The new plan proposed by Lord Owen and Mr. Stoltenberg would divide Bosnia into three republics without explicit reference to ethnic make-up. It is a fusion of a Serb-Croat

plan for a confederation of three ethnic-based states and the military weaker Bosnian government's drive to retain a unitary state based on a non-ethnic federal structure.

In its initial version, the new plan called for transforming Bosnia into an entity called the United Republics of Bosnia and Herzegovina. That name was changed slightly in a second draft, at the request of Bosnian presidency, to read the Union of Republics of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

In a further bow to the Muslim drive to maintain a single state, the agreement says that the new entity would be recognised under international law, as Bosnia would keep its seat at the United Nations.

In Sarajevo, military leaders of the three warring factions met at the airport Friday to try to end fighting that has left a six-day-old ceasefire in tatters.

But artillery and sniper killed seven people and wounded 33 during the morning in Sarajevo. Overnight an artillery shell scored a direct hit on the barracks of Spanish U.N. peacekeepers in the town of Jablanica in central Bosnia, killing one soldier

Christopher said to delay trip by 2 days

Combined agency dispatches

CAIRO — Egypt said Friday that U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher's planned trip to the Middle East had been put back by two days.

Egyptian Foreign Minister Amr Musa said before leaving to attend an Arab League emergency meeting on Lebanon in Damascus that Mr. Christopher would begin his trip on Monday.

"Christopher's trip has been delayed by two days," Mr. Musa told reporters at the airport.

Mr. Christopher, who planned the visit to try to revive the deadlocked Middle East peace talks, had been due in Cairo on Saturday and was scheduled to meet Mr. Musa and President Hosni Mubarak Sunday.

In Washington, the State Department said earlier that there was no change in his plans despite Israel's blitz of southern Lebanon and guerrilla rocket attacks on the Jewish state.

"There are no changes in the secretary's plan to be in the region to work on the peace process next week but I think he would certainly prefer to be focusing on the core substantive issues that are at the heart of the peace talks and not hostilities on the

ground," spokesman Mike McCurry said.

Mr. Christopher was due to spend Saturday to Thursday shuttling from Egypt to Israel, Syria and Jordan.

In Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) Chairman Yasser Arafat warned Friday that the peace talks will be jeopardised if Israeli attacks continue in Lebanon.

"If the violence against the Lebanese and Palestinians escalates, then the peace talks will explode," he told a news conference at the end of a three-day visit to Malaysia.

Mr. Arafat called on the U.N. Security Council to convene an emergency session to discuss the attacks.

"We hope that the United States will not use its veto power to cover up the crimes of the Tel Aviv regime," he said.

Asked if the PLO would take up arms in its struggle for a homeland, Mr. Arafat said, "if they (Israel) are using huge U.S. weapons against the Palestinians in Lebanon, then they have to understand that our patience has limits."

"Any action will face reaction," he said. "We hope that the

(Continued on page 10)

OPENING OF PEDIATRIC CLINIC & PEDIATRIC ENDOCRINOLOGY CLINIC

Dr. Fawzi AL-Hammouri

Consultant Pediatrician & Pediatric Endocrinologist
Member of the Royal College of Physicians (LONDON)

Member of the British Diabetic Association

Ass. Prof. at the medical school-J.U.S.T (formerly)

Announces the opening of his private clinic
at the Specialty Hospital, Shmeisani Tel. 693693

Shaath says meetings with Israel continue

CAIRO (R) — A Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) official said Thursday that secret meetings with Israel were continuing and the Israelis seemed more receptive to new ideas on Middle East peace at present than the United States.

Nabil Shaath, an adviser to PLO leader Yasser Arafat and one of the Palestinians' main strategists in the peace process, said further meetings had been held since news of the contacts leaked to the Israeli press two weeks ago.

"There is no doubt that the Israeli side at the highest level has authorised and continues to authorise serious meetings with the PLO leadership," Mr. Shaath told Reuters in an interview.

Mr. Shaath said it was still inappropriate to say who was involved, where they had met or exactly what had been discussed. The contacts break one of the last great taboos in Middle East politics, since Israel has always dismissed the PLO as a "terrorist" movement.

But he said that in various contacts between Israelis and Palestinians, two key ideas were being explored to break the current deadlock in the peace process, which began 21 months ago at a historic conference in Madrid.

The first was starting immediate talks on a permanent settlement on the West Bank and Gaza Strip in parallel to the present negotiations on a five-year interim period of self-rule in the territories.

The second was for an early Israeli withdrawal from some occupied areas — the Israelis had suggested the Gaza Strip, the Palestinians had proposed both Gaza and Jericho in the heart of the West Bank.

Mr. Shaath said the Israelis appeared receptive but the United States wanted both sides to stick to the "Madrid rules" under which they should first agree on self-rule and start discussing a permanent settlement only in the third year of the interim period.

"Ways out are in effect blocked so far by the Americans insisting on the Madrid rules," Mr. Shaath said.

The logic of the first idea is that the problems in the self-rule talks really concern "permanent status" issues: What territory will the Palestinians control and, in

particular, whether they will control East Jerusalem.

The aim of the second is to break the interim period into more easily achievable sub-stages: If agreement cannot be reached on self-rule in the whole West Bank and Gaza, at least it can be implemented in two significant areas as a first step.

"The ways out are really either changes in the rules of the game or proper interim measures," Mr. Shaath said.

"As for changes in the rules, such as embarking on parallel negotiations on the permanent status to tackle the issue of Jerusalem straight away and ask for the inclusion of the PLO as the negotiating partner, they seem to be acceptable to the Israelis in one way or another — but not to the Americans, who seem to be zealous about guarding the so-called Madrid rules."

He added: "The second way out is the Gaza-Jericho disengagement idea, which would give an immediate measure on the ground that is satisfactory to the Palestinians as an interim to the interim. That seems to be one idea certainly not rejected by the Israelis but we hear absolutely no compromise from the Americans on it."

Meetings in Egypt

Senior PLO officials met Egyptian Foreign Minister Amr Musa Thursday before U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher visits the Middle East in an attempt to salvage the peace talks.

The Palestinian team included Mahmoud Abbas, a member of the PLO Executive Committee, Yasser Abed-Rabbo, the PLO's information chief, and Dr. Shaath, one of its main strategists in the peace process.

Dr. Shaath told Reuters before the meetings that the Palestinians had prepared amendments to a U.S. draft paper on Palestinian self-rule but were unlikely to hand them to Mr. Christopher unless the United States changed its position on the crucial issues of Jerusalem and territorial jurisdiction.

An Israeli official said one of Israel's main hopes from the Christopher visit was that the Palestinians would submit a full set of amendments to the U.S. paper.

Khamenei: U.S. could not 'do a damn thing' to Iran

NICOSIA (AP) — Iran's spiritual leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei was quoted Friday as denouncing U.S. efforts to isolate his country and said Tehran was able to purchase weaponry anywhere it wanted.

Tehran Radio quoted Ayatollah Khamenei as saying that despite U.S. and other Western nations' efforts to block weapons sales during the 1980-88 Iran-Iraq war, "even in those conditions we were able to procure sophisticated weapons from the hearts of those very same countries."

Today, he added, "if we need something, we can get it." He made the comments late Thursday on a visit to the north-western provincial capital of Tabriz, according to the state-run radio. The broadcast was monitored in Nicaragua.

Ayatollah Khamenei described President Bill Clinton as a rookie, saying: "The young, naive individual who has come to power in the United States is unaware of his predecessors' efforts to tighten the economic noose around Iran."

U.S. administrations, he said, "couldn't do a damn thing before, and they can't now." Ayatollah Khamenei's comments were a response to U.S. efforts to isolate Iran economically

at a time it faces rapid inflation and rising unemployment.

Last month, U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher called on Washington's allies to stop doing business with Iran. He also said Iran should be barred from acquiring military technology.

The United States accuses Iran of supporting international terrorism. It also openly opposes the U.S.-backed Israeli-Arab peace process.

The United States also has accused Iran of trying to acquire nuclear weapons.

Iran recently acquired a Russian-built, diesel-powered submarine, the first for a country bordering the Gulf. It is docked at the southern Port of Bandar Abbas while its Iranian crew undergoes training.

A second sub is on its way to Iran, according to shipping sources in the region.

Washington imposed an embargo on trade with Iran after the 1979 revolution, when more than 50 American diplomats were held hostage by Iranian militants for 444 days.

Despite the embargo, the Iranians were able to get spare parts and even anti-tank weapons delivered directly from the United States in what became known as the Iran-contra scandal.



DISPLACED: A family leaves their village of Dir to the flood of 50,000 refugees fleeing relentless Zahranai near Nabatiyeh in South Lebanon, adding Israeli bombing of South Lebanon (AFP photo)

Attorney says he arranged asylum for Demjanjuk

TEL AVIV — John Demjanjuk's attorney said Friday he has arranged temporary asylum for the stateless man, but kept the name of the host country secret for fear it will withdraw the offer at the last minute.

Demjanjuk's native Ukraine appeared a likely destination. The retired Ohio auto worker, acquitted Thursday as the Nazi guard "Ivan the Terrible," was back in his old cell of seven years Friday awaiting deportation.

U.S. officials said Demjanjuk, stripped of his U.S. citizenship in 1981 for lying about his alleged Nazi past, was not eligible to return to America. But they did not rule out he could be allowed to enter the United States eventually.

Defence attorney Yoram Sheftel said Friday that in anticipation of the acquittal he secured the promise of a country to grant Demjanjuk temporary asylum until it is decided where he will settle.

Sheftel did not name the country, saying he feared that "any prior information will somehow undermine the matter."

Demjanjuk would not seek to become a citizen of this country because he wants to restore his U.S. citizenship, Sheftel told the Associated Press.

"He will stay as a stateless man in the other country," Sheftel said. "Everything was done and completed before the (supreme court) verdict."

Demjanjuk's denaturalisation is under appeal, with hearings set to begin before the 6th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in September.

Demjanjuk's son, John, and son-in-law, Ed Nishnic, were to visit him in his isolation cell at Ayalon prison later Friday.

Demjanjuk has asked prison



John Demjanjuk

authorities to take with him some souvenirs when he leaves Israel, including his brown prison uniform and some of the thousands of letters from well-wishers he received over the years, said prison services spokesman Dudi Ben-Ami. He said Demjanjuk's request was granted.

Israel's five supreme court justices, citing reasonable doubt, unanimously overturned Demjanjuk's 1988 conviction and death sentence as "Ivan," the sadistic gas chamber operator at the Treblinka camp.

The judges said there was strong proof Demjanjuk served in a Nazi unit. But the court did not convict him on those charges because they were not included in the original indictment and Demjanjuk did not have a chance to defend himself.

Demjanjuk had argued he was a victim of mistaken identity. His conviction had been based on dramatic testimony by five Treblinka survivors who said he was Ivan, but documents that emerged after the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 offered

conflicting evidence. Death camp survivors reacted to Thursday's ruling with anguish and shock.

Other people praised it as a victory for the Israeli justice system.

In Washington, Neal Sher, head of the Justice Department's Nazi-hunting office of special investigations, said despite the acquittal, Demjanjuk was ineligible to return on grounds he still served as a Nazi camp guard.

But John Demjanjuk said the administrative discretion to let his father back rested not with Sher but U.S. Attorney General Janet Reno. He said the U.S. appeals court in Ohio that sent his father to Israel has set a Sept. 3 hearing when it could decide to allow his return while reconsidering his extradition.

Ukrainian officials welcomed the Israeli court decision to acquit Demjanjuk and indicated he might be allowed to return to the land of his birth.

"Justice wins in the modern world although it needs so much time," said Anton Butenko, chief adviser on international affairs to President Leonid Kravchuk.

"It is normal and good when a court re-examines a case and establishes a man is not guilty."

A senior member of parliament, Bohdan Horyn, saw no reason why Demjanjuk should not be allowed to return to Ukraine.

"I think that a man released by Israel's supreme court has every grounds to go to any state, including Ukraine," Horyn said.

In Los Angeles, a prominent rabbi said the United States should bar Demjanjuk from returning because he was a Nazi guard, even if he's not "Ivan the Terrible."

Iraq is clearing waterway

BAHRAIN (AP) — Iraq is finally allowing the skeleton remains of some 75 ships caught in the Shatt Al Arab estuary when the Iran-Iraq war broke out 13 years ago to be towed away.

The signal is clear: Iraq is getting ready for the day when the U.N. Security Council lifts trade sanctions imposed since its 1990 invasion of Kuwait.

That, however, can only come after the council agrees that Iraq has complied with all Gulf war ceasefire provisions — there is no sign when that might be.

The vital shipping channel, Iraq's only outlet to the sea, has been blocked by the rusting hulks since they were trapped at the outset of the war in 1980.

Three carcasses have been towed out in a matter of four days, the news coming out only because U.S. Naval Forces Central Command is monitoring shipping to and from Iraq.

Spokesman Bruce Cole told the Associated Press that U.S. navy warships assisted by the coast guard on Wednesday boarded and checked the motor vessel Evia as it was being towed down from the Iraqi port of Basra, which is on Shatt Al Arab, to the southern Gulf port of Dubai.

On Tuesday July 27, the navy did likewise with the motor vessel Silver Crane, and on July 24 the motor vessel Horizon. All were travelling from Basra to Dubai.

"My understanding is they are in very poor condition," the spokesman said. "We have to be real careful in boarding them."

The U.S. Navy, along with assistance from the main naval powers that participated in Operation Desert Storm, watches shipping in the Gulf as well as in the Red Sea to guarantee enforcement of trade sanctions imposed since Iraq invaded Kuwait in August 1990.

Since the Gulf war, the maritime interceptions have been concentrated on the Red Sea, watching shipping through the Gulf of Aden.

The spokesman said that for 18 months there had been no interceptions of any ships this side of the waterway, until the towing of the vessels started from the Shatt Al Arab on July 24.

He said he had no record for earlier such movements.

But the London-based Lloyd's Shipping Intelligence unit, which monitors shipping around the world for commercial reasons, has in its registers at least two other earlier movements from the Shatt Al Arab — a fishing vessel in mid-June flying the Iraqi flag, and a formerly Yugoslav cargo ship called Istranka.

"We expect several more over the coming weeks," said the navy spokesman.

When the Iraq-Iran war broke out, approximately 75 ships were in the narrow waterway that separates part of its borders from Iran and opens onto the Gulf waters.

NEWS IN BRIEF

French-Iraqi committee to send medicine

LYONS (AFP) — A hundred tonnes of medicine for the children's hospital in Baghdad will be shipped out from Marseille Monday, the Association for Franco-Iraqi Solidarity announced here. The cargo will arrive in Aqaba and volunteers will take it to its destination. The association said it would take the opportunity to appeal to the Iraqi authorities on behalf of Jean-Claude Barriere, a 25-year-old French man sentenced to eight years prison for illegal entry. Mr. Barriere told journalists interviewing him in his cell that an Iraqi patrol picked him up in Kuwaiti territory and forced him to cross the border.

Orthodox leaders discuss church problems

ISTANBUL (R) — Orthodox church leaders met in Turkey Friday to discuss friction between the patriarchate of Jerusalem and other Orthodox communities, a church official said. Archbishop Bartholomew, spiritual leader of the world's 200 million Orthodox Christians, chaired the meeting which will discuss charges that Jerusalem's archbishop, Patriarch Diodoros, was interfering in the affairs of other communities. Patriarch Diodoros, who was not present at the meeting, has complained of the increased power of Istanbul Patriarch Bartholomew in the Orthodox world community following the collapse of the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia. "Church leaders will discuss problems between the patriarchate of Jerusalem and other churches," Metropolitan Bishop Meliton, spokesman of Istanbul patriarchate's 12-member holy synod, told Reuters. "Other churches have complained that patriarchate of Jerusalem has been interfering in their affairs," he said.

U.S. sub docks at Jeddah

MANAMA (R) — A U.S. nuclear-powered submarine had docked at the Saudi Red Sea port of Jeddah, a U.S. navy spokesman said Friday. The submarine, the USS Pasadena, is part of the battle group led by the aircraft carrier Abraham Lincoln which is in the Gulf on the other side of the Arabian Peninsula. Warplanes from the Lincoln fired on Iraqi radar on Thursday. But submarines can work independently of their lead ship. Subs sometimes operate in the shallow Gulf, but the Red Sea is deeper and easier to navigate in.

12 dead in Kurdish-linked violence in Turkey

DIYARBAKIR (R) — Twelve people, including seven Kurdish rebels, were killed in renewed violence in southeast Turkey, security officials said Friday. Four guerrillas of the Kurdistan Labour Party (PKK), two state-paid village guards and a woman were killed Thursday in a clash after a rebel raid on Villan hamlet in Bingol province. Turkish troops killed two other PKK fighters in another clash in Siirt province, a statement from the regional emergency rule governor's office in Diyarbakir said. PKK rebels killed two village guards on Thursday in the southeastern town of Pervari, officials said. Troops also found the body of a rebel in Tunceli province.

Israeli representative arrives in Taiwan

TAIPEI (R) — Israeli first unofficial ambassador to Taiwan has arrived in Taipei to set up a representative office in the absence of formal diplomatic ties. The office will promote trade and high-technology cooperation between the two sides, Jacob Fass was quoted by the semi-official Central News Agency as saying. Taiwan opened a representative office in Israel in April. Israel last year established full diplomatic relations with China, which views Taiwan as a renegade province. But unofficial links between Israel and Taiwan have been warm. Two-way trade rose to \$150 million in the first half of this year from \$125 million in the same period of 1992.

Kuwaiti MPs to visit Beirut

KUWAIT (R) — Kuwaiti members of parliament (MPs) will attend an emergency session of the Arab Parliamentary Union in Beirut on Saturday that will discuss this week's Israeli attacks on Lebanon, the official Kuwait News Agency said. The four-man delegation will be led by the speaker, Ahmad Al Saoudon, the agency said late Thursday. It said Lebanon's parliamentary caucus on Wednesday asked the union to call an emergency session to discuss Israeli artillery and air bombardments.

Japan lends Morocco \$128m for agriculture

RABAT (R) — Japan has lent Morocco 13.3 billion yen (\$128 million) to help finance agricultural and fisheries projects, the Finance Ministry said Friday. Under an accord signed by Finance Minister Mohammad Berrada and Japanese Ambassador Kyoichi Omura, the 20-year loan at three per cent interest with a 10-year grace period will be placed at the disposal of the government's credit agency Caisse Nationale de Credit Agricole (CNCA). The CNCA will use the funds to finance medium- and long-term loans for agro-industries and fishing operators.

Army intervenes to stop Sudan tribal fighting

KHARTOUM (AFP) — Government troops have deployed around Muglad in west Sudan to stop tribal battles that left more than 100 dead and 50 wounded, according to Interior Minister Abdul Rahim Mohamed Hussein. The clashes between two branches of the Arab Messerya tribe, a nomadic cattle-raising community, were sparked by a dispute over a marriage. Brigadier-General Hussein said on television late Thursday. A series of when a man from the Awlad Uman clan murdered a member of the Ziad clan for marrying his sister without his consent. Soldiers and police dismantled the rival clans and imposed a curfew on the main town in the region after the fighting, which reached its peak in the mid-July, left 108 dead, the minister said. He declared that the Arab tribesmen had been given firearms by previous Sudanese governments in their war against the rebel Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA).

Rabbi brings 'lost tribe' of Jews from India to Gaza

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (AFP) — An Israeli rabbi is bringing dozens of members of an isolated Indian community who believe they are a lost tribe of Israel to settle on the occupied Gaza Strip.

Rabbi Elihu Avichail has already sent 40 "Jews" from the state of Mizoram in India's north-eastern corner to a collective farm on the Gaza Strip.

The unmarried men and women aged between 17 and 35 proved such a success at Moshav Seggev that Rabbi Avichail has been asked to supply more Indians for neighbouring settlements, despite the bitter opposition of Palestinians.

The Rabbi seeks to avoid con-

troversy about the rights and wrongs of the operation and denied newspaper reports that the Indians were being used to replace cheap, but "dangerous" Palestinian labour in the settlements.

"I am not a politician. If Israel decides to pull out of Gaza I will accept that," he told AFP.

"If you can find me any other place in Israel where I can send these people I will do it, but there is no other place," said Rabbi Avichail, who runs a group called Amishav (my people return).

"The Gaza settlements are safer than the Old City of Jerusalem," the Rabbi said. "They know all about the situation." He has visited Mizoram where

some 750,000 members of the Tchang tribe believe they are descendants of the lost tribe of Manasseh, a Judean king during the 7th century B.C.

Christian missionaries converted the majority over a century ago, but some 5,000 still follow Jewish rituals.

For Rabbi Avichail the evidence is not enough to prove that the Tchang are one of the 10 lost tribes of Israel. "The most important thing is that their motivation is very great," he said.

The Indians, whose plane fares are paid by wealthy American Jews, convert officially to Judaism. Once accepted into the faith they benefit for the "law of return" and receive government

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel: 773111-19

PROGRAMME TWO

18:00 Les Aventures de l'Espace
18:30 Envoyé Special
19:00 News in French
19:15 Fenetre sur
19:30 News in Hebrew
20:00 News in Arabic
20:30 Wacky World
21:00 Perspectives
21:30 Varieties
22:00 News in English
22:20 Feature Film: "In the Eyes of a Stranger"

PRAYER TIMES

04:16 Fajr
05:45 Sunrise
12:42 Dhuhr
16:23 Asr
19:30 Maghrib
21:08 Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church Swifaleh, Tel. 810740
Assemblies of God Church, Tel. 632785
St. Joseph Church Tel. 624390
Church of the Annunciation Tel.

637440.
De la Salle Church Tel. 661757
Terrence Church Tel. 622366
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 632541
Anglican Church Tel. 630851, Tel. 628543
Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771331
Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 775261
St. Ephraim Church Tel. 771751
Assiut International Church Tel. 625526
Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 624328
The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints Tel. 823824, 654922
Church of Nazareth Tel. 675691

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.
Slight rise in temperatures will take place and winds will be northwesterly moderate. In Aqaba, winds will be northerly moderate and seas calm.

Min./Max. temp.
Amman 18 / 30
Aqaba 26 / 38
Desert 16 / 36
Jordan Valley 24 / 35

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY

AMMAN:
Dr. Mahmoud Hindi 892787
Dr. Fayez Al Dabbas 759155
Dr. Jamal Albara 748351
Dr. Nidal Al Dalich 627195
Firas pharmacy 661912
Ferdows pharmacy 778336
Al Asma pharmacy 637055
Nairoukh pharmacy 63672
Al Salam pharmacy 636730
Yacoub pharmacy 64945
Shmeisani pharmacy 637660
Najib pharmacy 847632

IRBID:
Dr. Nazam Sharani 248056
Al Ouds Pharmacy (—)
ZARQA:
Dr. Abdul Karim Khashashneh 985445

Khalilich pharmacy 985417

EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre 637111
Civil Defence Department 661111
Civil Defence Immediate Rescue 630341
Civil Defence Emergency 199
Rescue Police 192, 621111, 637777
Fire Brigade 891228
Blood Bank 775121
Highway Police 843402
Traffic Police 896390
Public Security Department 63021
Hotel Complaints 605800
Price Complaints 661176
Water and Sewerage Complaints 897467
Amman Municipality 773111
Telephone Information (directory assistance) 121
Overseas Calls 010230
Central Amman Telephone 623101
Repairs Telephone Repairs 661101
Abdull Telephone Repairs 773111
Jordan Television 774111
Radio Jordan 774111
Water Authority 680100
Jordan Electricity Authority 813615

Electric Power Company 636381

RJ Flight Information 08-53200

Queen Alia Int. Airport 08-53200

HOSPITALS

AMMAN:
Hussein Medical Centre 813813/32
Khadija Maternity, J. Amn. 644281/6
Al-Khad Maternity, J. Amn. 612412
Jabal Amman Maternity 642362
Malhas, J. Amman 636140
Palestine Shmeisani 664171/4
Shmeisani Hospital 669131
University Hospital 845845
Al-Muassir Hospital 667227/9
The Islamic, Abdali 666127/87
Al-Ahli, Abdali 664164/6
Italian, Al-Muhajreen 77101/3
Al-Bahri, J. Asirafich 775111/22
Army, Marka 851611/15
Queen Alia Hospital 662240/50
Amal Hospital 674155
ZARQA:
Zarqa Govt. Hospital (09)983323
Zarqa National Hospital (09)900560
Jin Sina Hospital (09)986732
Al-Hilwa Modern Hospital (09)99999
IRBID:
Princess Basma Hospital (02)275555

Greek Catholic Hospital (02)272725

Im Al Nafes Hospital (02)247100

AQABA:
Princess Haya Hospital (03)314111

FOR THE TRAVELLER

QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT
This information is supplied by Royal Jordanian (RJ) information department at the Queen Alia International Airport Tel. (08)53200-5, where it should always be verified.

ARRIVALS

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)
05:30 Jakarta, Singapore (RJ)
05:45 New Delhi (RJ)
06:30 Kathmandu (RJ)
06:30 Cairo, Aqaba (RJ)
06:30 Beirut (RJ)
06:30 Colombo (RJ)
06:30 Abu Dhabi, Dubai (RJ)
06:30 Cairo (RJ)
08:45 New Delhi (RJ)
08:45 Kathmandu (RJ)
08:45 Cairo, Aqaba (RJ)
08:45 Beirut (RJ)
08:45 Colombo (RJ)
08:45 Abu Dhabi, Dubai (RJ)
08:45 Cairo (RJ)

Other Flights (Terminal 2)

11:30 Sana (YJ)
19:25 Rome (AY)
20:35 Cairo (MS)
21:45 Dubai, Damascus (EM)
21:45 Larnaca (CY)
22:15 Paris, Damascus (AF)
DEPARTURES
Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)
07:00 Beirut (RJ)
12:30 Amsterdam, New York (RJ)
12:40 Istanbul (RJ)
12:45 Paris, Brussels (RJ)
13:05 Geneva, Madrid (RJ)
13:25 Cairo (RJ)
13:30 London (RJ)
13:30 Jeddah (RJ)
21:45 Damascus (RJ)
21:45 Bahrain, Doha (RJ)
22:30 Larnaca (RJ)
22:30 Abu Dhabi, Dubai (RJ)

MARKET PRICES

Upper/lower price in Jds per kg.
Apples 380/200
Bananas 440/340
Banana (Mukannam) 620/480
Carrots 520/350
Cabbages 100/50
Cauliflower 280/220
Cherry (red) 750/600
Cucumbers (large) 100/50
Eggplant 170/120
Garlic 170/50
Grapes 700/500
Lemon 300/200
Mango 140/70
Marrow (large) 150/100
Marrow (small) 250/200
Mint 50
Okra 650/550
Onion (dry) 300/200
Orange 240/200
Pepper (hot) 600/500
Pepper (sweet) 360/300
Potato 300/220
Tomato 130/80
Watermelon 240/150
Watermelon 140/60

Political parties expect selective electoral changes, debate impact

By Mariam M. Shahin
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Most of the nation's 20 registered political parties expect the adoption of a one-person-one-vote formula, but no major overhaul to the Election Law, and their officials and members continue to debate possible outcomes of amendments.

At least three political parties have already announced their candidates for the fall legislative elections, but the majority have decided to defer such announcements.

"We cannot decide who is running, how many people are running and where they will run unless we know what the law says about the number of districts, one-person-one-vote and many other issues related to the Election Law," said the current secretary-general of the Democratic Arab Unity Party (DAUP).

What is seen by some observers as an unexpected delay in amending the Election Law is regretted by most political party leaders.

It is a bit late to change the law, Secretary General of the Al Mustakbal Party, Suleiman Arar, said. His party is against a change of the current election system and in an interview with the Jordan Times Mr. Arar said the party is opposed to the one-person-one-vote concept and the redrawing of electoral districts at this stage.

Parties like Al Mustakbal, which has three of its members in the Lower House at present, will benefit if the electoral system remains unchanged, say observers.

"Parties or individuals that got

into the House through the old Election Law will try to block moves to change it, lest they lose any ground," said one member of a leftist party on condition of anonymity.

The leftist and pan-Arab parties appear the most worried about an Election Law change that would involve an alteration limited to the one-person-one-vote formula.

"This will benefit tribally-oriented parties," maintained Secretary-General of the Democratic Party for Progress in Jordan (DPPJ) Ali Amr.

"The one-person-one-vote formula will only be acceptable if accompanied by a change in the electoral districts to a single electoral district rather than 80," Mr. Amr told the Jordan Times.

Meanwhile, 15 political party leaders, last Tuesday sent a letter to Prime Minister Abdul Salam Al Majali saying the law "requires reconsideration" through a national dialogue, but stressed that no changes should be introduced without the approval of Parliament.

Most party leaders appear concerned over the eventuality of a change in the Election Law.

Joint platforms and tickets are vigorously being discussed among leftist and pan-Arabists as well as more centre-right parties.

"We are considering a coalition or joint tickets in some cases with nationalist parties such as Al Mustakbal, Al Watan and Yaka-za," Secretary-General of Al Ahd Party Hadi Al Majali told the Jordan Times last week.

Most of the centre-right parties, who have strong tribal back-

ing, are believed to support the one-person-one-vote formula as a first step to broader changes in the Election Law.

Leftists and centrists, as well as the powerful Islamic Action Front, are pushing a package deal in which electoral districts would also be altered to reduce the amount of gerrymandering that is inherent in the current law.

While leftists are pushing an all-out system which is based on demographic distribution of population or a single electoral district, the Islamic Action Front has chosen a middle-of-the-road approach.

Reflecting what appears to be a "diplomatic" approach, Ishak Farhan, senator and secretary-general of the Islamic Action Front, insisted that several variables must be considered in drawing up the electoral districts.

"Geography and demography must play a role," Dr. Farhan told the Jordan Times. "We cannot afford to have any group left out of representation."

If we set a limit to 10,000 people who get a representative in Parliament, then many areas in Jordan will not be represented at all," Dr. Farhan added.

"Thus we must consider both geography and demography."

Thus far the most immediate issue is what changes will be made, so that parties can start on their election campaigns.

Although most say they will field the same candidates regardless of any changes, they also say that their approach and the number of candidates fielded will depend on the law.

Majali calls for updating government administration

AMMAN (Petra) — Prime Minister Abdul Salam Al Majali said the philosophy of the government's central administration should be updated to fit the requirements of today.

At a meeting held Thursday at the Ministry of Finance and attended by heads of departments affiliated to the ministry, Dr. Majali said the government was keen to reduce bureaucracy, encourage decentralisation in decision-making to assist citizens swiftly and without complications.

He said this change should be started by administrative leaders in spite of the difficulties and obstacles facing them.

The premier called for expanding meetings between directors of departments and civil servants in order to find a modern concept of the civil service duties.

Stressing that a civil servant should serve citizens and not vice versa, he emphasised the need to create an opportune climate for attracting investments to expand the basis of production and consequently to create new jobs instead of creating non-producing jobs in the government.

These non-productive government jobs, he said, increase masked unemployment and add to the government's financial burdens, in addition to depriving productive sectors of the workforce.

Dr. Majali said the new administration ought to focus its attention on encouraging creativity and rewarding distinguished employees instead of treating excellent employees on the same footing with others.

He noted that government departments should aim to modernise and update their work-

plans in accordance with modern trends in administration.

The prime minister also called for expanding the process of financial decentralisation to make every governorate in the Kingdom an independent financial unit to save time and effort.

Finance Minister Sami Gammo, who was present at the meeting, said the ministry has prepared a workplan to amend and update its regulations and bylaws in accordance with a defined time frame.

The meeting was attended by the secretary general of the Finance Ministry, the directors general of the Land and Survey Department, the Customs Department, the Free Zones Corporation, the Income Tax Department, the Amman Financial Market, the General Budget Department and the Jordanian Investments Corporation.

Crackdown on illegal employees to begin

AMMAN (Petra) — The Labour Ministry is determined to take all necessary measures to control the local labour market and will deal firmly with guest workers employed illegally in the country along with their employers, according to Labour Minister Khaled Al Ghzawi.

In a statement released here Friday, the minister said that lack of cooperation on the part of the employers who have been found violating the labour law and the limited number of ministry inspectors checking on the status of non-Jordanian workers were among the reasons behind present problem.

Furthermore, there has been no plan for locating non-Jordanian Arab nationals who have entered the country, said the minister, in a statement to the Jordan news agency, Petra.

The ministry is currently collaborating with various concerned authorities to control the number of guest workers and to ensure that they have valid work permits, said Mr. Ghzawi.

Appealing to Jordanian employers to cooperate with the Labour Ministry to control the local labour market by giving priority to Jordanian job seekers, Mr. Ghzawi said that strict measures will be taken to deal with offenders.

More inspectors will soon be



Guest workers make up a significant number in the Kingdom's construction labour force

touring various companies, factories and other work places to seek out illegal workers, said the minister.

Violators of the law will be fined, and workers employed illegally will be ordered to leave the

country.

The minister appealed to the Federation of Jordanian-Labour Unions for assistance in finding work for Jordanian job seekers and to control the number of guest workers in Jordan.

U.N. official ends 4-day visit to Jordan Says he will raise sanctions issue with Ghali

By Sausan Ghosheh
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — United Nations General Assembly President Stoyan Ganey Friday left Jordan after holding talks with Crown Prince Hassan, Prime Minister Abdul Salam Al-Majali and other Jordanian officials about the future of the region, the reevaluation of the U.N. role, ongoing cooperation between Amman and the United Nations, and the effect of sanctions on Iraq on the Kingdom.

During his four-day visit to the Kingdom, Dr. Ganey, a former minister in the Republic of Bulgaria, expressed his views on the new world order and the role of the U.N. in the new political atmosphere.

Speaking at the World Affairs Council on Wednesday, Dr. Ganey stressed the need to enhance the role and effectiveness of the U.N.

Engineers look to Gulf states to market expertise

AMMAN (Petra) — The Jordanian Engineers Association (JEA) is contracting firms in the Gulf countries, particularly Oman, to market Jordanian engineering expertise and find work for unemployed engineers.

Hisham Khreisat, head of the JEA Training and Employment Department, said in a statement issued Friday.

So far 800 letters have been sent to these companies and some replies are now coming in, said Mr. Khreisat.

Most job-seeking engineers specialise in mechanical and electrical engineering, said Mr. Khreisat, adding that the profession suffers on a 2.5 per cent unemployment rate in the Kingdom.

The JEA has lately been receiving offers from local contractors for engineers with experience and the association is finding work for 300 engineers annually inside Jordan alone, he said.

To help young engineers find work the JEA has been cooperating with the Ministry of Public Works and Housing, the Armed Forces and the Sahab Industrial City which have been providing the junior cadres with on-the-job training for at least one year.

This year the JEA has arranged for 106 new engineers to have year-long training with various institutions, which pay them a JD 120 monthly salary.

Mr. Khreisat's statement came on day after the opening of a week-long event at the Professional Association Complex focusing on the activities and programmes of the JEA, particularly the architectural division.

The architectural week was opened by Amman Mayor Mamdouh Al Abbadi who deputised for His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent.

Mr. Al Abbadi voiced the Regent's appreciation to the JEA for its efforts in promoting construction and development in Jordan.

JEA President Husni Abu Ghaida addressed the opening ceremony by summarising the JEA's efforts in promoting the engineering profession and contributing to the general development of the Kingdom.

Later, Dr. Abbadi opened a week-long exhibition displaying various types of architectural work in Jordan.

"We are in the stage in which we must decide the future of the U.N., which world order do we want. Because instead of order we can have disorder," he said.

Since the end of the cold war, the U.N., according to Dr. Ganey, has been able to adopt pro-active rather than reactive measures towards peacemaking. But, in order for the organisation to be able to "lay a solid foundation for preventive action," access to timely and vital information is necessary, he said.

Thus, he added, more fact-finding missions have been conducted in between 1992 and 1993 than in any other prior year.

Sanctions, Dr. Ganey said, were frequently used in the past year to "encourage parties to abide by the positions of the Security Council" and to preserve peace.

Stressing that he understands the pressure sanctions exert not only on the member states against



Stoyan Ganey

which they were directed, but also on its neighbours, Dr. Ganey said he is pushing for the adoption of a resolution that will compensate the damages suffered by the neighbouring countries.

"It is a matter of pressing importance," he said.

Bulgaria, his homeland, he stated is suffering from sanctions imposed against Yugoslavia, but "Bulgaria is not alone in facing this quandary; your country (Jordan) is also facing such a matter."

Jordan's economy was severely

hurt by the sanctions imposed on Iraq.

"After talks in Amman" with government officials and business men, "I realise the importance of the problem and I will raise it again with the Secretary General (of the U.N.). We must do our best to adopt the resolution," Dr. Ganey stated.

In order to encourage countries to comply with the sanctions' decision, a permanent fund may be set up by the Security Council to compensate those unfairly affected by such a policy, he said.

"It is a matter of the efficiency of the U.N. activities."

The role of the U.N. is no longer just peacemaking, but also peace-building; it needs to provide social development and economic opportunity, concluded Dr. Ganey, the first president of the General Assembly to visit Jordan.

During the discussion phase of the meeting, participants de-

nounced what they would do

"The challenge facing the state is its present inability to cope with the problem and I will raise it again with the Secretary General (of the U.N.). We must do our best to adopt the resolution," Dr. Ganey stated.

"The U.N. is supposed to be a Security Council, not a peacekeeping force," he said, "and it is trapped by the Security Council's decision, a permanent fund may be set up by the Security Council to compensate those unfairly affected by such a policy, he said."

"It is a matter of the efficiency of the U.N. activities."

The role of the U.N. is no longer just peacemaking, but also peace-building; it needs to provide social development and economic opportunity, concluded Dr. Ganey, the first president of the General Assembly to visit Jordan.

Deputies, doctors and women show solidarity with Lebanese people

AMMAN (Petra) — A four-member Jordanian parliamentary delegation led by Lower House Speaker Abdul Latif Arabiyat will travel to Beirut today (Saturday) to take part in an extraordinary session of the Arab Parliamentary Union.

The session is to be held in the Lebanese capital as a show of solidarity by Arab parliamentarians with the Lebanese people in the face of the recent Israeli aggression on Lebanon.

Meanwhile, the Lebanese embassy here said a Jordanian medical delegation will go to Beirut in the next few days with medical equipment and drugs to assist the victims of the Israeli attacks.

Michael Jaara, the embassy's charge d'affaires, said he learned of the plan from Hassan Khreisat, secretary general of the Arab Doctors Union, who had called at the embassy.

Mr. Jaara voiced Lebanon's deep appreciation to the Jordanian people and government for their support.

On Thursday, women's unions

in Jordan staged a sit-in at the United Nations offices in Amman, raising posters that condemned Israel's attack on Lebanon and demanding U.N. intervention to halt the aggression.

The women delivered to the U.N. resident representative a memorandum voicing their denunciation of the Israeli actions as a brutal act against innocent women and children.

The memorandum expressed the women's absolute solidarity with the people of Lebanon in their efforts to resist occupation and demanded that the world community implement U.N. Security Council Resolution 425 which calls for Israeli troop withdrawal from Lebanese territory.

Several political party leaders and Parliament Deputy Mansour Murad took part in the sit-in.

Mr. Murad announced he was going to Lebanon to join the Lebanese liberation movement and called on youth from Arab and Islamic countries to support the struggle of the Lebanese people.

The Israeli aerial and artillery attacks against Lebanon have included Palestine refugee camps,

UNRWA concerned for refugees in Lebanon

Meanwhile the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA) Commissioner-General Hiter Turkmen Thursday deplored Israeli attacks against Palestine refugee camps in southern Lebanon which have resulted in the death of 10 Palestine refugees since July 25 and are causing thousands of refugees to flee their shelters, according to an UNRWA press release.

"Israeli attacks against Lebanon are having disastrous consequences for Palestine refugees living in the south of the country," Mr. Turkmen stated.

The commissioner-general added that UNRWA was distressed to see that Palestine refugees living in Lebanon, who have endured so much hardship and suffering, are facing yet another ordeal.

The Israeli aerial and artillery attacks against Lebanon have included Palestine refugee camps,

leading to the loss of lives and numerous injuries, the statement.

The bombing has damaged destroyed refugee shelters in Baddawi, Ein Al Hilwan, Al-Mi and Mien Mien camps.

Thousands of Palestine refugees are fleeing camps in southern Lebanon in search of safety.

Eighty per cent of Mien Mien camp residents, 80 per cent of refugees from Ein Al Hilwan and 30 per cent of Al Bussayn inhabitants have fled so far, have large numbers of Palestinians from Burj Al Shmali Rashidieh camps.

Over 100 Palestinian families have sought refuge in UNRWA schools in Saida and the agency working with other displaced families to identify possible temporary shelter for them.

Agency medical clinics run open to treat persons injured during the attacks, although medical services in some camps had to be suspended as a precautionary measure.

Nursing college to be transformed into 250-bed hospital—minister

IRBID (Petra) — Admitting that the Irbid governorate has been facing shortages in medical services, Health Minister Abdul Rahim Malhas announced that the Nuseibeh Al Mazenieh Nursing and Midwifery College in Irbid will soon be transformed into a 250-bed hospital.

The facility will be linked to the Princess Basma Training Hospital in Irbid, said the minister Thursday during an inspection tour of the medical services in Irbid city.

The Nursing and Midwifery College will be transferred to the building which now houses the Community College at Howara starting as early as next week, he said.

Noting that the move was called for by Prime Minister Abdul Salam Al Majali, Dr. Malhas said the hospital is badly needed in order to curb the shortage in hospitalisation services in the Irbid region.

The nursing building offers a temporary solution to the lack of medical services available, caused by insufficient funds to set up a hospital in Irbid; a project that would take a long time to construct and millions to furnish, said Mr. Malhas.

Noting that the college-turned-hospital will become operational before the end of this year, the minister said the move



Minister of Health Abdul Rahim Malhas (left) Thursday tours health facilities in Irbid

will double the number of hospital beds.

Together with the Princess Basma Hospital, the total number of beds will rise to 300.

This is a temporary solution until the King Abdullah Hospital

is completed at the Jordan University of Science and Technology (JUST), said Dr. Malhas.

To further boost medical services in the governorate, the minister instructed the Princess Basma Specialised Clinics to re-

main open until the new hospital is built, and the general practitioners' clinics to remain open until the hospital is built, he said.

The minister also stressed the growing medical needs of local residents.

Plot needed to extend Sahab industrial city

AMMAN (Petra) — The Jordan Industrial Estates Corporation (JIEC) is searching for a suitable plot of land to serve as an extension to the Sahab Industrial City because of the growing demand for space by new industries.

The announcement, made Thursday by JIEC Director General Fayez Suheimat during a visit to the industrial city by Minister of Industry and Trade Bassam Al Saket and Ministry of Energy and Mineral Resources Walid Asfour, said JIEC is forced to look for a new site for another industrial city on the outskirts of Amman.

Over the last few years and in the first half of 1993 there were more industrial investors than expected and their demand for factories cannot be met at the Sahab city because of the limited area of land remaining, Dr. Suheimat explained.

Dr. Suheimat, who accompa-

nied the two ministers on a tour of various parts of the city and its services to investors, said the Sahab Industrial City now houses 292 industrial projects employing 9,000 workers.

Estimated capital invested in the projects, he said, is JD 200 million so far.

According to Dr. Suheimat, 35 per cent of the factories produce food products, and the rest manufacture a variety of items including electric appliances, chemical products, furniture, and packaging paper, construction materials, engineering and metal products, textiles, leather and plastic.

Noting that most of the products are exported to Arab and foreign countries, Dr. Suheimat said at least 90 local firms at the industrial city produce items imported by European countries, including Russia and the United States.



Minister of Industry and Trade Bassam Al Saket (second from left) and Minister of Energy and Mineral Resources Walid Asfour Thursday tour the Sahab Industrial City, escorted by Jordan Industrial Estates President Fayez Suheimat (right photo)

WHAT'S GOING ON

The following listings are compiled from monthly bulletins and the daily Arabic press. Readers are advised to verify the listed time and place with the concerned institutions.

EXHIBITIONS

★ "ACOR at 25," in celebration of 25 years of archaeological research in Jordan, at the American Center of Oriental Research.

★ Exhibition of a new collection of art works by Princess Wijdan Ali at The Gallery, Hotel Jordan InterContinental.

★ Exhibition of paintings and ceramics by Ali Al Mi'mar, Hazem Al Zu'bi, Abdul Raouf Sham'un and Jalal Ureilat at Eshebeila Art Gallery, 6th Circle, Amra Shopping Centre.

★ Exhibition of British Archaeological projects in Jordan at the Royal Cultural Centre.

Jordan Times

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Haunting destruction

GENERAL YEHOSEF Dorfman, the commander of the Israeli artillery corps which is responsible for most of the destruction that has been inflicted on Lebanon in the last six days, was no less candid than many of his superiors in the Israeli government when he said that his country's campaign was aimed at reducing the villages and towns of South Lebanon into heaps of rubble. "We are ... firing into the villages in order to cause damage to property ... and create a situation in which the residents will leave the villages and go north," the general said. This man, his soldiers and the Israeli air force seem to be winning on that score, of course. Thousands of South Lebanese are still pouring into Beirut and its suburbs to escape the Israeli created hell while part of Lebanon is turned into another "security zone," albeit a brutal one.

Meanwhile, Hizbollah continues to be defiant and maintains the barrage of rocket attacks on northern Israel. But whether it is Hizbollah guerrilla's attacks or Syrian "negotiation through guns" as Israeli politicians put it, or Iran's insistence on "sabotaging the peace process," the world should be ashamed of what Israel is doing to unarmed people caught in the crossfire of regional powers. It may be true that Hizbollah derives its strength from Iran, but it is definitely truer that that group earns its legitimacy from the Lebanese people themselves, especially those from the south, who want to make Israel withdraw from their occupied lands.

U.S. President Bill Clinton can always count on Syria to restrain itself, as he has said, in the face of an Israeli army, which is armed to the teeth with the latest American weaponry. But the U.S. president cannot continue to ignore the basic fact that Israel still refuses to implement U.N. Security Council Resolution 425, exactly at a time when he watches every Iraqi move in order to see whether it complies with or violates U.N. resolutions. While Mr. Clinton and the rest of the international community, including the Arab World, continue to bury their heads in the sand and overlook the plight of the Lebanese people and the misery they are being subjected to, the rest of us will neither forget nor forgive the crimes that are being perpetrated against humanity by the Israeli war machine. Hizbollah itself has said on so many occasions that it was willing to halt its attacks on northern Israel if the Israelis withdrew from the south of Lebanon, according to Security Council resolutions. Furthermore, the Lebanese army has expressed readiness to patrol the borders with Israel once the latter withdrew from the self-declared security zone. And, above all, Syria has expressed similar intentions. But it is not Iran, Syria, Hizbollah or the Palestinians who keep the south of Lebanon on fire. It is Israel's insistence on maintaining its occupation of South Lebanon in defiance of international law and legitimacy that is putting its own peace and the whole region's stability at risk. If the Israelis will ever learn their basic lesson in history, only time will tell.

But the misery and destruction they have caused the Lebanese people over the past week are acts that should haunt their conscience and that of the whole world for a long time to come.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

UNDER THE pretext of ending some guerrilla factions' attacks on Israeli positions, the Israelis are launching a genocide and forcing the inhabitants of 30 Lebanese villages to evacuate their homes and move to Beirut, said Sawt Al Shaab daily. Yitzhak Rabin has openly declared war on the civilian population, destroying their homes and killing their children and at the same time, destroying the last chance for any peaceful settlement in the whole region, said the daily. Quoting warnings made by King Hussein in his statement to Al Hayat newspaper Wednesday, the paper said that the world community is not heeding the warnings and not taking any step to stop the atrocities and the aggression. For this reason, said the paper, King Hussein has expressed hope that the Arab Nation will show solidarity with Lebanon, close its ranks and end its side differences in order to confront the common threat. Had Washington and its allies not given Israel the green light to launch its aggression Tel Aviv would not have taken this dangerous step, and had Washington been really interested in making peace between the Arabs and the Israelis, it would not have encouraged Israel to carry out its genocide against the Arab population, added the daily. It is indeed through continued U.S. backing that Israel has defied all U.N. resolutions and has maintained its occupation of Lebanese territory despite Resolution 425 ordering it to pull out from the occupied Lebanese territory, adding the paper. This situation, said the paper, calls for a unified Arab action, starting with the convening of a meeting at the highest possible level and a revival of the Arab defence pact which could deter further Israeli acts of aggression.

A COLUMNIST in Al Ra'i Arabic daily said that Israel is not after the Hizbollah groups in southern Lebanon but it is seeking to expand the land it has been occupying in the area. This wide-scale aggression is not against groups of guerrillas launching small attacks here and there but it is a well-planned conspiracy against Lebanon where Israel seeks more land and more water resources, said Ahmad Al Misch. Israel does not want a land inhabited by Arabs and therefore it is destroying their homes to force them to leave, he said. Mr. Rabin has openly declared his intention of forcing the Lebanese in the south of the country to move north so that the way can be paved for Israel to carry out its evil intentions, he said. Israel, he said, does not seek peace with Lebanon or any of the Arab parties involved in the so-called peace process, and is seeking to perpetuate its occupation of all the Arab land in Lebanon and Palestine. For this reason, it is finding pretexts to achieve that goal, said the writer. But one has to admit also, said the writer, that had it not been for Washington's encouragement and backing of this aggression, the Israelis would not have committed their crimes. He said that the United States is thus losing its credibility as a peace mediator, and it is up to the Arabs to act collectively to stop the aggression.

Jordanian Perspective

By Musa Keilani

Goodwill, clarity of vision should lead quest for confederation

The ongoing debate in Jordan on the proposed Jordanian-Palestinian confederation reflects an opinionated imbroglio of hasty conclusions.

The future of Jordanian-Palestinian relations in a post-peace process era was a subject which remained largely submerged during the past year. His Majesty the King having repeatedly affirmed that debate on the issue was premature. But it resurfaced with two specific events: first when Yossi Beilin, the Israeli deputy foreign minister, raised the issue during discussions with Dennis Ross, the U.S. coordinator of the peace process who visited the Middle East in July, and then by Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat when he publicly expressed his total support for a Jordanian-Palestinian confederation as the formula for post-peace process relationship between the two banks of the River Jordan.

Of course, the idea of a Jordanian-Palestinian confederation was always in the minds of Jordanians and Palestinians, and the media used to refer to it off and on prior to the latest attention that it has attracted. Several studies were also made.

Dr. Abdul Salam Al Majali, the current Jordanian premier, conducted a study of the confederation concept in 1987, one year before Jordan severed legal and administrative ties with the West Bank. The study, conducted when Dr. Majali was president of the University of Jordan, outlined the pros and cons of confederal ties between Jordanians and Palestinians and gave particular focus to the repeated fascias in attempts to bring about cohesive, real unity between the two peoples.

Against the background of the 1984 Palestine National Council (PNC) resolution calling for a Jordanian-Palestinian confederation, the study reviewed the Feb. 11, 1985, Jordanian-Palestinian accord on political coordination as well as the 1972 proposal for a united Arab kingdom and the Egyptian moves that killed it. The lessons of the events of September 1970 were incorporated in the study. A suggestion was also made for a united Arab state with a hereditary leadership heading two governments and two legislatures.

Another study was prepared by the late Wasfi Tel, the Jordanian premier who was assassinated in Egypt in 1972. The study was done in 1966, one year before Israel occupied the West Bank, Gaza Strip and the Golan Heights. Ahmad Touqan and Al Tel took part in formulating the study.

Though very exhaustive in its analysis, the study did not propose, as Dr. Majali's study did, a constitutional forum of a united Arab state.

Dr. Majali's concept emphasised a hereditary Hashemite line of succession in a united Arab state, where Jordanians and Palestinians will rotate as heads of government and armed forces commanders.

The idea then was to weed out the phobia many East Bank Jordanians had of what they saw as the dangers posed by the economic might and the demographic strength of the Palestinian community. In 1988, they felt that any peace settlement with Israel would only serve to advance the Jewish state's "Jordan is Palestine" slogan and translate it into a reality on Jordanian soil, especially if Palestinians in Lebanon came to the Kingdom.

In this line of thinking, the situation could be further exacerbated when thousands of West Bankers will be forced to leave their ancestral home and settle in a more prosperous and accommodating Irbid, Amman or Zarqa.

It was a genuine phobia that a Palestinian takeover of Jordan was imminent. It even prompted many Jordanian tribal leaders to ask that when they pass away they be buried in their farms so that their sons and successors will hesitate to sell the land.

"The genuine Jordanians," as they called themselves, expressed in many leaflets their real worry of being overswamped by up to four million Palestinians coming in through the new gates of confederation from Gaza, Syria, Lebanon and the diaspora, as well as the West Bank. All the newcomers, they felt, had the qualitative edge of better education, better organisation, better politicisation and superior financial clout.

Dr. Majali's formula of rotating government leadership and armed forces command meant to smoothen the frustrations of many Jordanians of Palestinian descent who resented being "treated as second-class" citizens and denied equal opportunities within the higher echelons of power of Jordan.

The proposal suggested that a unitary council be elected to represent the two executive councils — on the two banks of the River Jordan — as well as the two legislative councils.

That was part of the historical setting which actually dates back to the early 1920s when Transjordan became East Jordan and then an emirate created in line with an agreement among Emir Abdullah, Winston Churchill, T.H. Lawrence and Lord Samuel to accommodate a "Palestinian population spillover" caused by the fulfilment of the Balfour Declaration, part of which included the East Bank. It was due to Emir Abdullah's astute political foresight and sagacity that he managed to extract today's Jordan from the Balfour Declaration.

It was due to that 1920 commitment that Jordan offered immediate citizenship to the Palestinians who ended up in the East Bank after the creation of the state of Palestine in 1948. All other Arab states offered Palestinian refugees only a temporary status — legal and otherwise.

But the current heated debate factionalising East Bankers and West Bankers revolves around serious issues that should be addressed fairly and justly; more importantly, frankly and candidly.

Many analysts see Mr. Arafat's statements on confederation as an attempt to use that lofty noble aim to save himself from the political isolation he suffers in Tunis — within the ranks of his own Fatah Revolutionary Council — as well as the Palestinian constituency in the occupied territories where he feels threatened by the young, dynamic leadership which has emerged in the wake of the Middle East peace process. These younger leaders are assertive and they have a rich history of resisting Israeli occupation and of suffering in Israeli prisons while others, who claimed Palestinian leadership, were enjoying the luxury of five-star hotels in the diaspora.

These young turks are the ones referred to by Dr. Haidar 'Abdul Shafi and Dr. Saeb Erakat when they openly criticised the

shortcomings of the PLO leadership.

Mr. Arafat, many analysts believe, fears that the culmination of the peace process will herald a new leadership of Palestinians from within the occupied territories leaving him with little influence or control over them.

It would appear that Mr. Arafat's assumption is based on a hypothesis that if the proposed interim self-government authority in the occupied territories is linked to Jordan through confederation, then, in view of Amman's commitment to its recognition of the Palestine Liberation Organisation and Mr. Arafat as its chairman, the formula will be a water-tight conduit for him to realise his life-long ambition of becoming the "president of all Palestinians."

Israel has its own rationale for supporting the confederation proposal. Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, who voiced support for the idea much before his Foreign Minister Shimon Peres or his deputy Beilin, is seeking to preempt an entire series of developments that would otherwise have to take place.

The overall Israeli rationale is that the confederation concept will nullify the Palestinian quest for self-determination and statehood. Beleg incorporated within a wider entity, the Palestinians will not have to hold elections to a legislative assembly at this stage. Gaza, however, will remain a hot issue since the strip had never been part of Jordan.

Another strong rationale for Israel is the fact that a confederation will exculpate the Israeli government in its rejection of the return of 1948 and 1967 Palestinian refugees.

Their return to an independent Palestinian state will pose a potential future threat. But their return to a confederated Palestine will guarantee their accommodation and settlement in the East Bank of Jordan since the population density of the West Bank precludes the possibility of their settlement there.

Consequently, Israel's interest in defending the confederation is understandable since it leads to an exemplary application to the Palestinians of what is happening to the Bosnian Muslims — being divided within three political regions, Gaza and the West Bank, the East Bank and the diaspora.

The fragmentation of Palestinians will relieve Israel of all worries about future confrontations and will relegate that issue to be an Arab-Arab topic.

An interim Palestinian self-government is supposed to be in place for five years. During this period there will be a lot of bickering and nagging between Israelis and Palestinians. But with a formula of confederation, this interim period will actually be minimised if not actually cancelled out.

Jordan is expected to take the role of ensuring a limited size and role for the new Palestinian government, much less than that of an independent state but much more than an autonomous entity. That special role is expected to overcome the enigma of Security Council Resolution 242 and its application since what is referred to as "occupied territories" should be returned to sovereign states recognised as such by the U.N. — a status the Palestinians do not enjoy.

Hypothetically, such a course of events will exonerate Israel if it does not return the land to Palestinians or to Jordan, which recognise the PLO as the sole representative of the Palestinians. Moreover, Jordan's July 1988 decision to sever administrative and legal ties with the West Bank is seen as an effective renunciation of all territorial claims to the occupied territory.

Jordan and the PLO have taken the first concrete step towards eventual confederation by setting up joint committees to scrutinise the various aspects of future relations and arrive at a formula which will alleviate East Bankers' fears of being overswamped by confederation and as a sugar-coated term for the ominous "Jordan is Palestine" solution.

The same committees are supposed to find ways and means to eliminate feelings of frustration and "second-class" citizenry among Palestinians. The teams are supposed as well to address the issue of what is called "compulsory Jordanisation" of many refugee camp-dwellers who have been in Jordan since 1948 and defined as Palestinian by the PLO but as Jordanian by Jordan, which sees them on an equal footing with any other citizen from any other part of the Kingdom.

Many questions are raised over the descendants of the refugee camp residents. This middle-aged segment of the Jordanian population is considered genuine Jordanians by many, but the PLO and the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) for Palestine refugees consider them Palestinian.

The six Jordanian-Palestinian committees have to handle this thorny issue and come up with an acceptable formula.

In conclusion, I believe that the Jordanian-Palestinian relationship has its roots in history, for centuries, when the Muslims entered Jerusalem. The demographic typology gives certain indications that both peoples share the same tribal Arab ancestry.

Four hundred years ago, Jordan and Palestine were one unit divided along horizontal administrative lines rather than the British-introduced vertical administrative lines. Under the Ottoman administrative patterns, Hebron and Karak shared the same family ties, as were Salt and Nabulus, Irbid and Nazareth, Hweitans and Orehats, Massayeds and Tayahbas and many other tribal and sedentary affiliations.

Despite the law and order disturbances of the 1970, the cohesive values that bind the two peoples are too strong to be marginalised by the tactical games some politicians want to achieve. Moreover, the strategic interests of both peoples require the optimum of unitarian cohesiveness to confront the threatening challenges both peoples face. Some of these challenges are threats to identity, obliteration and the extinction of national culture.

I believe that goodwill is more important than any formula for a united Arab kingdom or a united Arab state or a Jordanian-Palestinian confederation or a "Palordan."

The two peoples are more like Siamese twins. They have never been separated. Even during the 1922-1952 era, their ties remained intact; both shared aspirations, struggles, joys and miseries.

To separate them now will spell an end to both: culturally, nationally and economically, but foremost of all, politically.

Israel is not counting cost of displacing tens of thousands

By G.H. Jansen

THANKS to Israel's factual accounting (or was it a boast?) on Thursday morning that in the preceding four days of its assault on Lebanon it had fired 25,000 shells into that country, plus 1,000 bombs and missiles from aircraft, it is possible to estimate partly the cost of the offensive: that is of the artillery shells.

Israel is using two types of heavy artillery guns: the 155 millimetre, firing a 96 pound shell, that cost \$1,300 each, and the 210 millimetre gun that fires a 200 pound shell, costing \$2,000 each. So the four-days barrage cost Israel, at least, somewhere between \$32 million and \$50 million. But that expense, unfortunately, is not likely to concern Israel very much because Israel every year receives \$1.8 billion in "defence aid" in addition to around \$2 billion in non-military aid from the U.S. while the shells could have been produced by Israel's large military industry, the guns are U.S.-manufactured.

Also Israel probably calculates that even \$50 million was cheap as the price of driving out 400,000 to 500,000 Lebanese Shi'ites, some of whom probably support Hizbollah.

It is now confirmed that to keep the refugee convoys moving north there has been no Israeli shooting at private cars, buses and ambulances in the convoys.

Convincing proof that the Israeli army is not, as claimed, only hitting "terrorist bases" is the fact that amongst its targets are the large, palatial villas that stand outside many Shi'ite villages in southern Lebanon. These have been built by former inhabitants of the village who, having emigrated to Latin America or West Africa and prospered there, make a show of their new wealth through these villas. They are absolutely the last places in the world to be used as "terrorist bases" but, nevertheless, are being "rendered uninhabitable" according to the plans of Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin.

This is just one further proof that the Israeli onslaught is indiscriminate. U.N. observers on the spot in Lebanon state that for the first day, Sunday, some attempt was made by Israel to shoot at Hizbollah targets, but after that South Lebanon was a free-fire zone: "Almost only civilian targets have been hit": houses, roads and bridges, schools and clinics. These same U.N. observers testify to the use of "phosphorus shells" to burn crops and fields and to kill livestock.

Not everybody in the south of Lebanon has run away. It is estimated that up to 25-30 per cent could still be there and it is they who could "live to fight another day." It could be that Israel intends using the tanks and troops it has brought forward to get rid of these obstinate creatures.

These reinforcements were moved up on the very day that President Bill Clinton, for the first time, publicly asked

Israel, and Hizbollah of course, to stop firing and when Secretary of State Warren Christopher let it be known that he was trying to negotiate a ceasefire for that very day. In addition to the military reply to the U.S. leaders, Israeli Prime Minister Rabin declared that the firing would go on. This open defiance indicates that the Israelis know, correctly, that they hold the White House and State Department in the hollow of their hand.

"The Americans and the West as a whole could pluck up enough courage to curb Israel if they would give their action the solid basis of U.N. Resolution 425 whose second paragraph 'calls upon Israel immediately to cease its military action against Lebanon territorial integrity and withdraw forthwith its forces from all Lebanese territory. But the Americans and the West will not say one word about 425 because it puts Israel in the wrong ab initio as the instigator of the present crisis and of all similar crises in Lebanon since 1978."

The Americans and the West as a whole could pluck up enough courage to curb Israel if they would give their action the solid basis of a U.N. resolution, number 425 of March 19, 1978, whose second paragraph "calls upon Israel immediately to cease its military action against Lebanon territorial integrity and withdraw forthwith its forces from all Lebanese territory." But the Americans and the West will not say one word about 425 because it puts Israel in the wrong ab initio as the instigator of the present crisis and of all similar crises in Lebanon since 1978.

Even if 425 is forgotten and buried — and the Arab foreign ministers meeting in Damascus should ensure that that does not happen — the Lebanese have the right to ask this question: Where is the proportionality between three Israeli civilians killed and 120 Lebanese killed and over 400 wounded and a sixth of the country's population made homeless?

THE WEEK IN PRINT

Israeli attacks put peace process in precarious position

Reviewed by Elias Nasrallah

ISRAEL's aggression on Lebanon is the topic tackled by most of the commentaries in the local press which also covered prospects for the Middle East peace process and domestic affairs in Jordan.

Yitzhak Rabin is defying the world community with his new aggression on Lebanon and open declaration of his intention to destroy Lebanese villages, said the Al Dustour daily. It is rather difficult to find the correct words to describe the anger and the indignation in the hearts of the Arab masses over the world community's failure to come to the aid of the helpless civilians, and it is hard to imagine how peace can ever be established in the Arab World, said the daily. Taher Al Udwan com-

mented on the planned Friday meeting in Damascus of Arab foreign ministers as useless and not helping the civilians to return to their destroyed villages nor stimulating the peace process.

The columnist, who writes for Al Dustour, recalled that following Israel's 1982 invasion of Lebanon, the Arabs failed to do anything meaningful for Lebanon and indeed they paved the ground for the Palestinian resistance forces to free Lebanese territory.

The Israelis are conducting a war of expansion, aiming to annex more Arab territories, said Mahmoud Al Rimawi, a columnist, in Al Ra'i daily. By forcing the villagers to leave their homes, which are being systematically demolished, the

Israelis are following the example of the Serbs in Bosnia, where the civilian population is continually being evicted from their homes, said the writer.

In the absence of Arab solidarity and closed Arab ranks, the Israeli wolf is being turned into a giant, wreaking havoc in Arab land, killing Arabs and demolishing their homes at will, said Mohammad Subeili in Al Dustour.

The writer said that the weak and frightened Arab regimes should realise that by refraining from taking collective action against the Israeli enemy, they will encourage the new "giant" to swallow up the entire Arab land.

Israel is being encouraged by the United States and the impotence of the Security Council

in its brutal aggression on Lebanon, charged Mohammad Kawash in Al Dustour. The writer said that Israel is clearly aiming at burning and destroying every place where resistance could be launching attacks on the occupation forces. In so doing, he said, the Israelis are destroying whole villages and pushing troops closer to the main cities.

Lebanon, the victim of the latest Israeli aggression, has been prevented from lodging a complaint with the U.N. Security Council, said Mazen Hamad in Al Dustour. He said Washington had prevented Lebanon from even complaining to the world community against the aggression which the United States has encouraged and backed.

By so doing, the United States is applying the so-called new world order in a manner that can only serve Israel, Washington's strategic ally in the region.

The aggression on Lebanon has placed the peace negotiations in balance and undermined the coming tour of the Middle East region by the U.S. secretary of state, said Sawt Al Shaab daily.

Indeed, the new aggression bears the seeds of Israeli threats levelled not only against Lebanon but rather at all the Arab parties involved in the peace process, said the administration remains totally biased towards Israel, the Middle East region can never enjoy any peace, said the paper.

Salameh Ekour, a writer in Sawt Al Shaab daily, said that Israel seems to be in total collusion with the U.S. administration to subject Arabs to the U.S.-Israeli desires. The writer said that the Arabs realise that the United States and Israel are working to weaken the Arab Nation and that their actions against Somalia, Iraq, Libya and Lebanon are but manifestations of this conspiracy.

He said that the aggression on Lebanon is directed against the whole Arab Nation and defies Syria's military presence in Lebanon.

Mohammad Kawash, a columnist in Al Dustour, said that Israel realises too well that the

(Continued on page 5)

Watch that thought — your computer may be listening

By David Thurber
The Associated Press

YOKOSUKA, Japan — Forget keyboards and mice. Someday, computers and other machines may be controlled directly by human thoughts.

While other researchers struggle to develop computers that can understand human speech, scientists here are trying to go a step further — computers that can read your mind.

"Computers today are very difficult to use," says Norio Fujimaki, a researcher for Fujitsu Corp. "First you have to be able to type. It would be very nice if you could just think about something, and have the computer automatically do it."

No amount of deep thinking by the scientists makes this an imminent achievement, however.

Researcher Akira Hiraiwa says the goal will probably take years because of the difficulty of deciphering the brain's weak and complex waves. He works at a laboratory here of the telecommunications giant Nippon Telegraph and Telephone Corp.

Mr. Hiraiwa and Mr. Fujimaki are studying electrical signals associated with thoughts and body motions. They hope to develop ways of using those signals to control machines — computers or otherwise.

Mr. Hiraiwa has created a computer-assisted robot hand that can mimic motions of a human hand by analysing the tiny nerve pulses sent by the brain to the finger muscles.

The signals are picked up by coin-sized sensors attached to the inside of a watchband and then sent to the computer, which divides them into the messages intended for each finger and instructs the robotic fingers accordingly.

"It's difficult because the signals are so weak and are hard to detect and differentiate," Mr. Hiraiwa says. In a recent demonstration, Mr. Hiraiwa grasped a ball in his fingers — the watchband strapped to his wrist — and the robotic hand clenched another ball, copying each finger's motion.

It initially took a supercomputer three hours to learn a person's nerve signal patterns, Mr. Hiraiwa says. Now, a much smaller computer with special processes

sors needs only a few minutes.

Mr. Hiraiwa hopes within a few years to develop marketable brain-controlled artificial limbs that would be much easier to use than the cumbersome ones now available.

The NTT researchers have decided to focus on deciphering nerve pulses sent from the brain to muscles, since they are much stronger than the minute signals inside the brain associated with thinking.

Researchers at Fujitsu, a computer and semiconductor maker, have taken a different approach. They are analysing currents the brain generates as people prepare to speak. The currents, though feeble, are stronger than those

linked directly to thoughts.

Using an array of 12 sensors attached to subjects' heads, Mr. Fujimaki is measuring differences in electrical patterns inside the brain when the subjects mentally prepare to "say" different words without actually moving their mouths.

Using computers to analyse those patterns, Mr. Fujimaki says he has found "significant" differences between the "mentally spoken" sounds "ah" and "ii."

Fujitsu officials say they hope eventually to be able to differentiate the electrical patterns for every different word, which could make direct thought input from the brain into computers possible.

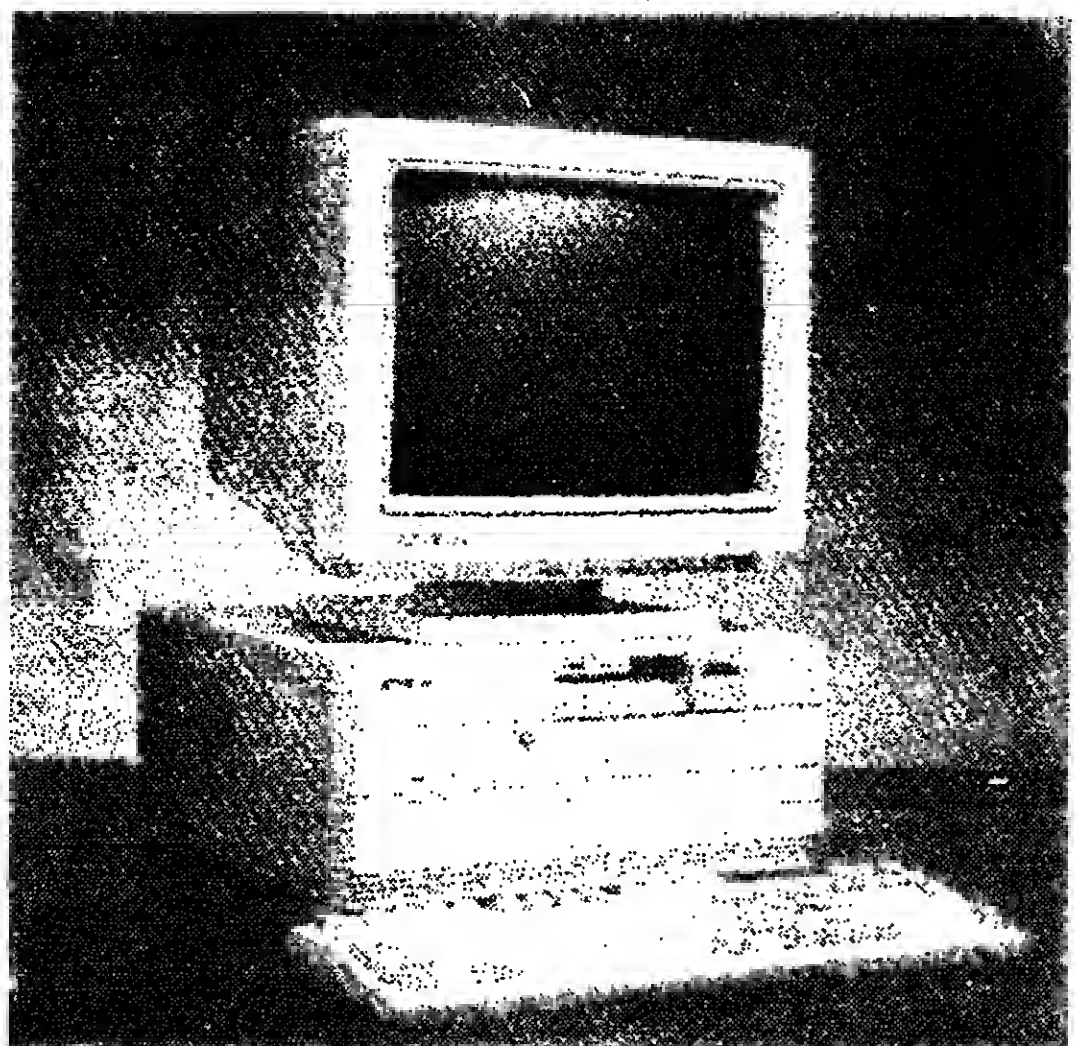
That goal is still a long way off.

It's still unclear, for example, whether electrical patterns generated by "mentally spoken" words are related to their sounds, or are some kind of symbolic representation of the concepts behind the words that would be common for all people regardless of their language.

Being able to differentiate so many words would also require incredibly sensitive sensors and massive computer power.

"I'll consider the project successful if within three years we can differentiate the brain signals for 'yes' and 'no,'" Mr. Fujimaki says.

That would at least allow you to turn your computer on and off.



Will human intelligence ever create computer that could read thoughts? A sci-fi question whose answer is for now reassuring: Not soon.

Maps roll back apartheid frontiers

By Rich Mkhondo
Reuters

JOHANNESBURG — Political mapmakers are charting the boundaries of the new South Africa, rolling back apartheid's frontiers and 350 years of white domination at the stroke of a pen.

The 15-member Delimitation Commission is, however, walking a tightrope in trying to accommodate the aspirations of democrats, federalists, nationalists, separatists and those whose political hue defies a label.

More than 100 suggestions have been received by the commission to replace the existing four provinces and apartheid homelands with a formula acceptable to all.

Mini-state names including Afrikaans/Boereland, Liberal Cape, Afrikaners, Tswanaaland, State of Capricorn and Egoi are being bandied about the corridors of power.

Once it has drawn up its recommendations on how many regions there should be, where boundaries should fall and what the balance of power should be between central and federal governments, the commission will present its ideas to multi-party negotiators charting the transition to democracy.

Political analysts say the commission has to take into account factors including each region's

"economic viability, functionality, traditional and historical boundaries, demographic characteristics, resources, development potential, infrastructure, culture and language."

The recommendations will be closely watched and fiercely debated by opposing blocs within democracy talks, proponents of a future federal state with powerful regional governments and those who prefer toothless federalist regions and powerful central government.

The white-ruled government and Nelson Mandela's African National Congress (ANC) recently produced similar maps of their vision of the future, a coincidence that was not lost on those who accuse the two of collusion.

The government unveiled two options, the preferred version consisting of nine regions and the other of seven. The ANC proposed an eight-region dispensation.

Both the ANC and the government agree on regions for parts of the Eastern Cape, Natal, Eastern Transvaal and Northern Transvaal and the Pretoria-Witwatersrand-Vereeniging industrial heartland (PWV) while there were differences on the Western Cape, the Orange Free State and Northern Cape.

But negotiators said of crucial importance was agreement between the government and the

ANC that Natal province should be one of the regions, partly meeting Zulu leader Mangosuthu Buthe's demand for an autonomous Natal.

"The fact that the government and ANC maps are largely similar, give or take a boundary or two is good news for the negotiation process," said one negotiator.

"It means that the two most powerful political blocs should not end up spending too much time squabbling about regional boundaries," he said.

He was supported by Land and Regional Affairs Minister Andre Fourie who said there was room for consensus between the government and the ANC.

Most groups and parties envisaged maximum devolution of power and functions, entrenched legislative powers for regions, simultaneous elections for regions and parliament and regional representation in the upcoming transitional parliament.

However, the commission faces a tough battle in trying to accommodate conflicting proposals from those groups unwilling to submit to the mainstream view.

A common feature for right-wing pro-apartheid groups is the demand for self-determination in an autonomous Afrikaner homeland.

But the right is divided, with the extreme right-wing wanting a

white mini-state and moderates in favour of autonomy within the new South Africa.

The analysts say given the lack of support for the idea of an independent Afrikaner state within the 26-member groups and parties negotiating the country's transition to democracy an independent state is out of the question.

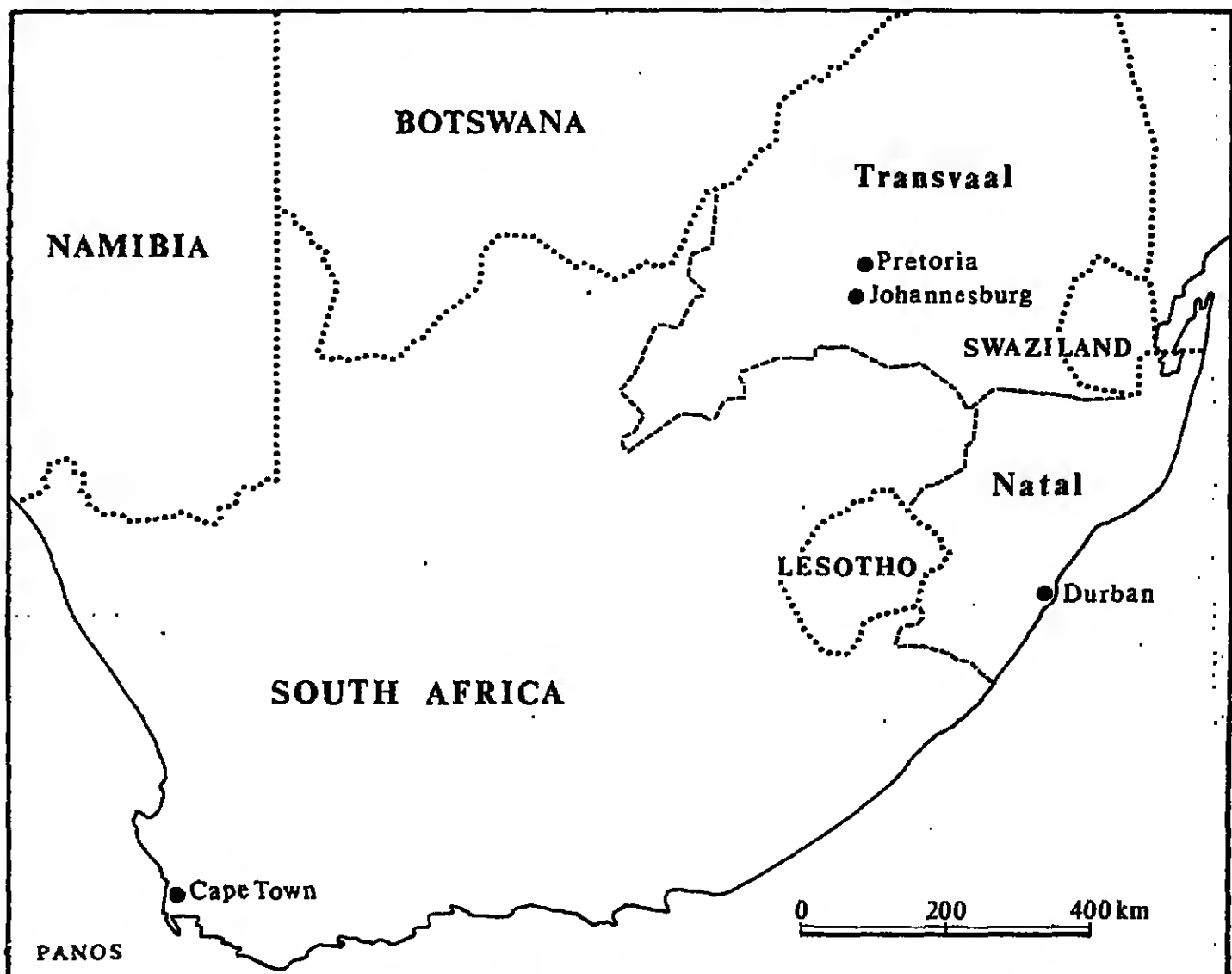
They say the commission would be guided by the reality that whites are a minority, and Afrikaners were a minority within a minority in most regions.

However proponents of an Afrikaner homeland led by the newly-formed Afrikaner People's Front (APF) warned they would not surrender their quest for an area where they would exercise self-determination.

To complicate matters the Volksfront has proposed republics which would include the old "Boer republics" of Transvaal, Orange Free State and Northern Natal provinces.

AVF leader ex-General Constand Viljoen has warned negotiators to take their proposals seriously.

"Should we be ignored, the government and the ANC will have to take responsibility for what happens. We are facing a critical period as far as the Afrikaner and his fight for self-determination is concerned," he said.



Canada under attack in blood scandal

By Deborah Charles
Reuters

MONTREAL — The Canadian government has come under close scrutiny for its role in a tainted blood scandal that a decade ago left nearly 1,000 people infected with the AIDS virus.

One of the gravest complaints is that the government knew that blood contaminated with the virus was infecting haemophiliacs and transfusion recipients, but it waited nearly a year to revamp the system and supply only AIDS-free, heat-treated blood products.

Government officials have denied media reports that the state may not have acted as fast enough as it could to provide a safe blood supply free of the human immune deficiency virus (HIV), which causes AIDS.

Government and Red Cross officials said they acted as fast as they could within the system to dispose of all blood supplies that could have been tainted and replace them with heat-treated ones.

"In 20/20 hindsight it's easy to say we did not do what we should have," said Greg Smith of Health and Welfare Canada. "At the

time, everyone in the world wanted (heat-treated) products... and there was only a certain amount of capacity."

According to letters and memos — some of which were released under the access of information act — glitches in the system appeared to have caused delays that haemophiliac groups say cost hundreds of lives.

At least 1,000 people are known to have contracted HIV from contaminated blood and blood products and nearly one third of them have already died, according to figures provided by Canada's Health Ministry.

The human immunodeficiency virus was first identified in mid-1981, and by September 1984 researchers knew heat-treatment could inactivate the HIV virus.

Chronologies written by the Red Cross and Health and Welfare Canada show that although they knew AIDS could be spread by blood and blood products in the early 1980s, they were unable to revamp the blood system until July 1985.

Israeli attacks defy the world

(Continued from page 4)

Arabs are divided and weak, that the United States grants it full backing and that the United Nations is paralysed.

The writer said that no words of condemnation on the part of the Arab regimes, nor any meetings, can be of help to the Lebanese and Palestinian people at this moment. Only collective action on the part of a united Arab front can ensure the restoration of Arab rights and put an end to Israel's aggression, said the writer.

Atef Joulan, a guest columnist in Al-Dustour, said that the Israelis and the Americans are launching aggression on the Arab Nation and asking the Arabs to protest lest they upset the so-called Middle East peace process.

The writer said that as long as the Arabs are involved in this peace process the door will remain open for more Israeli aggressions on the Arab Nation. Indeed, he said, the present moment is the most opportune for Israel to achieve its objectives in Lebanon and other parts of the Arab World.

Should Warzone Christoffer's plans go ahead, the U.S. secretary of state will be coming in the Middle East for talks with leaders here to urge them to resume the stalled peace negotiations, said Mohammad Kawash in Al-Dustour.

The writer said that the U.S. secretary would surely be trying to find new ways to breach the unity of Arab parties' stand vis-a-vis the peace process and the resumption of the talks with Israel.

The writer said that Mr. Christopher, who was recently quoted as saying that the occupied West Bank and Gaza

Strip are not occupied, but rather disputed territory, can be of no help to the cause of peace.

Tareq Masarweh, a columnist in Al-Rai daily, said that the American secretary of state is coming to the region to urge the Arab parties to remain committed to the peace process. All the Americans want is to see the Arabs and the Israelis talking, but there is no need for them to reach any agreement and in the final stages of the failed negotiations Washington is bound to wash its hands of the U.N. resolutions, charged the writer.

The peace process is 22 months old now, but no tangible results have emerged, said Dr. Fahd Faneek, a columnist in Al-Rai daily. Most observers expect the Arab-Israeli negotiations to fail and collapse and they have doubts about any political solution to the problems of the region.

No matter how hard Washington and Israel will try to ignore Arab rights in Palestine in general and in Jerusalem in particular, there can be no solution without a settlement of the issue of the Holy City and the restoration of Arab rights there, said Saleh Al-Qallab, a columnist in Al-Dustour.

Commenting on Mr. Christoffer's planned visit, the writer said that unless the Americans and the Israelis respond favourably to the legitimate demands of the Palestinians, there can be no final settlement to the problem and the Palestinians would not give up the struggle.

The failure of more than 35,000 secondary school students in the Tawjihi examination this year is bound to re-

lease more unemployed young men and women in Jordan, further aggravating the unemployment problem, said Mohammad Kawash. The Al-Dustour columnist said that he did not blame only the Ministry of Education for its teaching system that brought about the failure of this big number, but also the system of accepting students in Jordanian universities, which keeps the door closed before many students.

Mohammad Dabbas, a columnist in Sawt Al-Shaab, said that the parents of the successful Tawjihi students are now facing a dilemma as they try desperately to see their children enrolled at one of Jordan's universities. It is true that the number of seats are limited, but it is also true that under the Constitution, justice and equal opportunities should be offered to all people, said the writer.

In this case, and in order to be fair to the students, those wishing to enrol should have equal opportunities, there must not be any exceptions to the rule and there must not be lists of students with priority over others in terms of acceptance, demanded the writer.

Saleh Al-Qallab, a columnist in Al-Dustour, accused some people wishing to run in the parliamentary elections of buying the votes of the electorate and promising them favours, material or otherwise.

The writer said that these elements are holding behind-the-scenes transactions and employing agents to do the job for them. The writer urged the concerned authorities to investigate into these actions and ensure that the coming elections will be held fairly and freely.

NOTICE

JORDAN ELECTRICITY AUTHORITY PREQUALIFICATION OF CIVIL WORKS CONTRACTORS AQABA THERMAL POWER STATION STAGE II TENDER NO. 59/93

Jordan electricity Authority (JEA) intends to issue tender forms for prequalifications of civil works contractors for the extension of Aqaba Thermal Power Station-Stage II.

The Stage II expansion project consists of 2x130 MW fuel oil fired steam generating units cooled by sea water. The civil works contract involves large sophisticated civil works such as foundation works for the steam turbines, generators, boilers, and for all other mechanical and electrical auxiliary equipment as well as supply and installation of yard piping, all concrete and structural works, excavations, roads, drainage systems, etc. It is expected that local and international contractors with experience in this type of work would participate in this tender. Due to the special type of works covered by the civil works tender and the need of specialised experience, it is expected that some type of joint-venture between local contractors and international contractors shall be introduced.

The construction work is expected to commence on site in May 1994 and the project is expected to be financed by Arab and international development funds in addition to the self-financing by JEA.

Contractors with experience in above described work shall apply for prequalification in accordance with the forms issued by JEA.

Forms of prequalifications will be available from:

JORDAN ELECTRICITY AUTHORITY
PROCUREMENT DEPARTMENT
JABAL AMMAN-SEVENTH CIRCLE
TEL. 815615
P.O. Box 2310
AMMAN-JORDAN

Starting from Saturday 31/7/93 for a non-refundable fee of JD150 for each set (2 copies each) payable to JEA. The last day for accepting the filled-in prequalification forms will be Wednesday 1/9/1993 before 12:00 noon at the Tendering Committee Secretary, JEA Offices-Amman.

THE MODERN MONTESSORI SCHOOL (MMS)

P.O. Box 2444, Shmeisani, Amman, Jordan
Telephone: 660504, Fax: 684905

We are pleased to announce that registration for Grades 1, 2 and 3 is open for the scholastic year 1993/1994 at our current location in Shmeisani until completion of construction of the new school building, at which time registration for Grades 4 to 6 will start for the scholastic year 1994/1995. The school will upgrade the classes yearly allowing the students to reach high school without any delays.

Registration hours: From 8:1:30 and from 4-6.

Last date for accepting applications: August 18, 1993

The construction of the new school building is currently ongoing on an 18,000m² land opposite the King Hussein Medical City. The school has been designed to meet international school requirements and will be equipped in accordance with the Montessori system, with modern equipped laboratories, library, cafeteria, gallery, indoor swimming pool, gymnasium, indoor and outdoor playgrounds.

Our philosophy, goals, and objectives:
Our philosophy and objectives are to provide a stimulating, prepared environment for the student in order to foster respect for learning, joy in achievement and growth of the individual through independence, discovery, success and inner discipline.

Our programme is mostly individualised and will always keep the students as the foremost priority. The school is organised to encourage a high level of cooperative planning, teaching and evaluating designed to produce success in advancing the learning process.

All our Montessori classrooms are totally equipped with specially designed and sequenced materials which Dr. Montessori devised. These materials, together with highly trained and Montessori certified management and teachers, provide a classroom where the child is stimulated and challenged, but never pressured.

Our main objective is to achieve the following goals for each student:

- 1) Develop a positive attitude towards him/herself, school and life.
- 2) Become a self-confident, independent learner.
- 3) Develop habits of concentration for his/her work.
- 4) Foster curiosity in the student.
- 5) Develop initiative and persistence.
- 6) Achieve inner security and sense of order.
- 7) Help each student develop his sensory motor skills.
- 8) Sharpen his/her ability to discriminate and judge.
- 9) Assist social development.
- 10) Develop creative intelligence and imagination.

In conclusion, we are dedicated to helping each student develop within himself the fundamental skills, habits, attitudes, appreciations and ideas which are essential for a lifetime of creative learning.

"Never let a child risk failure until he has a reasonable chance of success," Dr. Maria Montessori.

Gold bursts through \$400

EC currency grid fights for survival

PARIS (R) — The European Community's (EC) exchange rate grid tottered on the edge of collapse Friday as central banks fought furiously to fend off a huge speculative attack on the system's weaker currencies.

Traders said the central banks faced overwhelming odds and predicted the demise of the semi-fixed exchange rate mechanism (ERM), one of the European Community's enduring achievements.

But top officials from Paris and Bonn, which form the EC's main political axis, refused to give in. Conservative Prime Minister Edouard Balladur, who has said he would resign rather than devalue, said the ERM was still alive and kicking.

"There are rules and these rules are working well. They are made for situations like this very one," he told reporters.

A senior monetary official in Bonn added: "Up to now the intervention of the central banks has been sufficient to convince the markets that we will remain firm. We are optimistic, but the storm is not over."

The view on the currency markets, where an estimated \$1 trillion a day changes hands, was very different.

Few if any traders believed an overhaul of the ERM, meant to be the springboard to full-blown economic and monetary union

with a single European currency, could now be staved off.

Influential U.S. investor George Soros, who made \$1 billion betting correctly last September that the British pound would have to quit the ERM, said it was now futile to shield the grid.

Mr. Soros, who had pledged Monday not to speculate against the franc because he did not want to be accused of destroying the ERM, said he now felt free to resume trading in the franc.

Traders speculated that the Bank of France had almost exhausted its currency reserves and that only massive buying by the Bundesbank, Germany's central bank, was preventing the franc from falling below its ERM floor of 3,430 francs per mark.

The two banks opted to make their last stand for the franc at 3,430 after suddenly abandoning attempts — at untold cost — to support the French currency at 3,418 francs per mark.

Although the system was still intact at the end of Friday afternoon, rumours were rife that France, along with Denmark, Belgium, Portugal and Spain, would have to devalue perhaps as early as this weekend. The mark would be revalued upwards.

Belgium's budget minister said no meeting of the EC monetary committee had been set, but one Paris diplomat said an orderly realignment might now be the

only solution.

Alternatively, the ERM, set up in 1979 to provide the exchange rate stability the EC's common market needed to thrive, might be suspended and currencies allowed to float.

Mr. Balladur, who discussed the crisis this morning with Socialist President Francois Mitterrand, was asked if the rules of the ERM could go on being applied for long. "That depends on the goodwill of each and everyone," he replied.

In France, there was no doubt who was to blame for the latest crisis, the third onslaught on the franc within a year.

Economists said the Bundesbank, by refusing to make anything other than a token cut in interest rates on Thursday, had wilfully ignored the desperate need of its neighbours for lower interest rates to fight recession and rising joblessness.

Financial markets made the simple calculation that France and others would rather sacrifice their currencies than keep the cost of money at politically intolerable levels.

Gold traded above \$400 an ounce on Friday for the first time since the Gulf war in January 1991 after U.S. investment fund buying propelled it through the crucial barrier overnight, dealers said.

Renowned Czech beer maker seeks foreign partner

PRAGUE (AP) — As Czech industry rushes toward privatisation, even the brewery that made Budweiser famous has to change.

Whether new Czech capitalists or the American brewers of "The Bud" have the most say in the transformation of the Budvar brewery remains to be seen, as the trademark of the Czechs' rich beer tradition moves ahead on two fronts.

The government is preparing to auction off a minority stake in the brewery, and let ordinary Czechs become shareholders through its voucher scheme to privatise Czech industry.

At the same time, Budvar managers are negotiating a possible merger with Anheuser-Busch, the producer of the Czech beer's American namesake — Budweiser.

Privatisation Minister Jiri Skalkicky has said that a government stake in Budvar not exceeding 34 per cent would be sold at auction to the highest bidder.

The sale of only a minority stake reflects the fear of tradition-bound beer drinkers that the prized Budvar brewery could be sold out to foreigners.

Budvar, located in the southern Bohemian town of Ceske Budejovice — known as Budweis in German — has brewed its namesake beer since the 19th century.

Adolphus Busch, a native of southern German state of Bavaria, acquired the rights to sell beer

under the Budweiser name in North America in the early 20th century. The beer's success soon made his company, Anheuser-Busch, the world's largest beer producer.

Budvar by comparison is small, and Czechs fear its home-brewed quality, known throughout the world, could be lost to mass production. Budvar employs 348 people with annual production of 65 million liters (136.5 million pints).

Under privatisation rules, a portion of shares in the state-owned brewery would be distributed among Czech citizens. After the minority stake is auctioned, it is not known if the government plans to retain any stock in the brewery.

Budvar managers, meanwhile, are talking to Anheuser-Busch and other foreign brewers about a possible merger.

"We talked to Busch and also a number of other major beer producers," Budvar Director Jiri Bockek said in a telephone interview. "It is too early to say anything, but the fate of the brewery is being decided now."

The hardest part of the bargaining process is likely to be the estimate of trademark costs.

A merger would open vast new territories for the American giant. It could also mean that other Czech breweries would have to seek foreign capital to help fight increasing competition.

Cuba to go slow on economic reform

HAVANA (R) — Cuba's communist government told its citizens Thursday that a move to legalise the use of hard currency would be introduced only gradually because new special shops needed to be set up to cope with the increased demand.

"It is necessary to make clear that the measures announced on July 26... can only be applied gradually," the government said in a brief official statement published on the front page of the Communist Party newspaper Granma.

President Fidel Castro said Monday night the government would remove a ban on Cubans owning convertible currency like U.S. dollars as part of a series of measures aimed at boosting the state's hard currency earnings at a time of economic crisis.

The Granma statement was intended to head off a stampede by Cubans to try to spend the dollars they already had in a few existing hard currency stores reserved for tourists, diplomats or other foreigners on the communist-ruled Caribbean island.

Foreign diplomats said the authorities clearly wanted to carefully control the new opening and avoid a dollar-spending free-for-all that could result in public order problems.

Many Cubans who had tried to enter some tourist and diplomatic dollar shops in Havana this week were disappointed to be told that these were still for foreigners only.

"The commons has not been properly prepared yet for it to come into effect immediately," the official statement said.

It added special shops needed to be set up where Cubans would be able to spend hard currency. Granma said the government would need to draw up and pass a number of decrees and laws removing the previous ban on hard currency ownership and regulating its future use.

"These are being prepared so that everything can be done in an orderly and legal fashion," the statement said.

Cubans had been eagerly it would give them access to a whole range of food and consumer goods which are currently very scarce and not available through the state rationing system, which sells in Cuban pesos.

Among those who have access to hard currency are Cubans sent funds by family members abroad, those who work in tourism and can receive tips and sports and cultural personalities and Cuban professionals who work abroad.

Legalising the use of dollars in Cuba would hasten the end of the U.S. embargo against Cuba and create a two-tiered society of those with and without access to dollars, economists have said.

Economist Arturo Villar said legalising the use of dollars would expand the Cuban market and encourage U.S. companies to turn up the pressure on Washington to drop the embargo.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Qatar to set up central bank

DUBAI (R) — The Gulf state of Qatar has said it would set up a central bank to replace the existing Qatari Monetary Agency (QMA) carrying out virtually all central banking functions. The official Qatari News Agency said the decision to set up a central bank was taken at the weekly meeting of the cabinet in Doha. The agency gave no reasons for the move. The QMA was set up in 1973 when Qatar issued its own currency, the riyal.

Oman to expand cement plant

MUSCAT (AP) — Oman Cement Company, the sultanate's biggest cement plant, is to undergo a major expansion at a cost of 42 million riyals (\$109 million), a market official has said. It is to be financed in part by a public issue of shares in September to raise 30 million riyals (\$78 million), said Mahmoud Bin Mohamad Al Jarwani, director-general of Muscat Securities Market. The company, now fully owned by the government, hopes to obtain the rest of the money through soft loans, he said. The expansion will raise capacity to 3,000 tonnes a day from the current 2,000.

China beefing up its meat industry

BEIJING (R) — China's newly-wealthy consumers are changing their diets, forcing the country to beef up its meat industry, the China Daily Business Weekly has said. In poorer times, Chinese ate mostly vegetables, rice and noodles, with meat reserved for special occasions and memorable feasts. Now, higher incomes have made many meat mad. Meat production is expected to hit 37 million tonnes in 1995 and 42 million tonnes in 2000, up from about 28.5 million tonnes in 1990, the newspaper said. The ministry of agriculture is pumping more than \$5 billion in investment into the meat industry between 1991 and 2000 to meet the new demand for meat. Even the kind of meat Chinese eat is changing. Where once Chinese turned to pork when they wanted meat, the new plans call for a cut in pork production and increases in beef, mutton and poultry.

Tanzania to set up stock market

DAR ES SALAAM (R) — Tanzania plans to introduce a stock exchange to help speed up enforcement of the government's privatisation plans. Finance Minister Kishwaha Malima has said. "The Tanzanian government is in the final stages of opening a stock exchange — to speed privatisation," Mr. Malima told Reuters. "The privatisation of state enterprises cannot meaningfully succeed without a stock exchange and money market for mobilising equity," he said. Mr. Malima did not say when the exchange would be opened but a senior official at his ministry said it would be within "months." Mr. Malima, a former university economics professor, said the government had already pushed legislation through parliament allowing individual Tanzanians to buy shares in state firms.

HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR SATURDAY JULY 31, 1993

By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation

GENERAL TENDENCIES: Take some time today to study the finest philosophies ever expounded by men of insight and faith so that you can draw great minds to you and live a fuller, richer life in the future.

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) Consider well the wishes of your own can early before you decide some different arrangements you wish to make, tonight use care in public matters.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) You see ways early to put in motion some revision in outside routines but make sure they are well thought out or they could lead to problems.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) You see ways to increase your income but don't act too hastily for you are likely to commit yourself to more than is wise for you to do.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) You can think of a friend who can be helpful in helping you gain a desire but don't present that person or you can raise some opposition.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) A private inspiration seems excellent for you but when you start to put it in motion you run up against some opposition but keep steadfast in your purpose.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) Your deep-seated goals seem closer to you than you had thought early but later you find another person gets in way and you have to diffuse your efforts.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) Money matters and solving them seems easy early but you soon find there are other considerations involved that require astuteness on your part.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) A new activity is of much interest to you but there are some factors you are not aware of that must be wisely handled before accepting them.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) Whatever you have in mind of an emotional nature can seem to be all right early but then you find the persons concerned balks at your solution.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) You can please on whose feelings are on his/her sleeve but later you find the person was not satisfied at all and needs more assurance of your affection.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) You start daily activities in good shape but soon get tired of them or want to make some changes that are not satisfactory to everyone concerned.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) You now find that whatever pleasures appeal to you in the daytime requires more attention and effort to make work than you have realised so be prepared for such.

THE Daily Crossword by Hugh M. Cleveland

ACROSS

- Fun at (redicule)
- Epic poet
- With celerity
- A man with...
- In a state of abeyance
- Dairy case item
- Take/take/take
- Of a geologic era
- Balance
- Poetic word
- Labored engine sound
- Coatties
- Follows closely
- Italian city
- Picked
- Atts.
- Take/take/take
- Ring results
- Unadorned
- Cat singer
- Certain stanzas
- Certain vessel
- Native metals
- Weakened by water; abbr.
- Water: Sp.
- Perfumes
- Take/take/take
- Round of applause
- Change
- Dugout
- Molt
- Bearings
- Sullen

DOWN

- Native of ancient Britain
- Gen. Bradley
- Military cap
- Ken of comics
- Percherons
- A million
- Varied; abbr.
- Old French coin
- Johnny
- Pracade
- Compassionate expression
- Doctine're group
- Woe one
- Secondhand
- Flood
- Included channel
- Round of applause
- Support with money
- Group character
- Came up
- Grande
- Anomalous
- Gastropod
- Vapid
- Bluebonnets
- Deneb, e.g.
- Pony
- Robert
- Quagmire
- Picked
- Masac.
- doorkeepers
- vars
- Twelve
- Span
- 50 Spot
- Quote
- Delighted
- Moun in Palestine
- Light color
- Recipe word
- Empty talk
- Spide or Sreid
- By League student

Yesterday's Puzzle Solved:

ACROSS: 1. LUCK, 2. LUCAN, 3. NOBIA, 4. TOMMYBONG, 5. AMBER, 6. SEABOARD, 7. ALGEBRA, 8. DIE, 9. AMER, 10. SLOPE, 11. OMO, 12. RIB, 13. NOVELS, 14. PAL, 15. RIDE, 16. AREA, 17. TACKE, 18. RIDE, 19. NICE, 20. FIVE, 21. STRECHIE, 22. HASS, 23. RANTS, 24. ASKED, 25. GILF, 26. HAT, 27. GALORE, 28. BASTIONS, 29. ELAVE, 30. GASTROTON, 31. LOREN, 32. ABLE, 33. ATION, 34. SPARE, 35. TEEN, 36. MOON.

DOWN: 1. Native of ancient Britain, 2. Gen. Bradley, 3. Military cap, 4. Ken of comics, 5. Percherons, 6. A million, 7. Varied; abbr., 8. Old French coin, 9. Johnny, 10. Pracade, 11. Compassionate expression, 12. Doctine're group, 13. Woe one, 14. Secondhand, 15. Flood, 16. Included channel, 17. Round of applause, 18. Support with money, 19. Group character, 20. Came up, 21. Grande, 22. Anomalous, 23. Gastropod, 24. Vapid, 25. Bluebonnets, 26. Deneb, e.g., 27. Pony, 28. Robert, 29. Quagmire, 30. Picked, 31. Masac., 32. doorkeepers, 33. vars, 34. Twelve, 35. Span, 36. 50 Spot, 37. Quote, 38. Delighted, 39. Moun in Palestine, 40. Light color, 41. Recipe word, 42. Empty talk, 43. Spide or Sreid, 44. By League student.

Study says information science in Jordan lacks seriousness and qualified manpower

By Samir Shafiq
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The proper usage of information in Jordan lacks the seriousness it should carry and, as such, the utmost utilisation of this vital resource remains weak. Yousef Nusseir told a recent economic symposium in Amman.

Dr. Nusseir, acting director-general of the National Information Centre (NIC), also said that there was still a lack of qualified manpower in the area of "information network management at the national level" in addition to a lack of specialists in ensuring safe and secure transmittal of information.

The NIC chief pointed out that before setting up the centre in 1992, as one of the specialised scientific and technological research centres affiliated to the Higher Council for Science and Technology, there was no coordination among the information centres in the country as the sector had been developing on individual efforts and was being shaped according to personal and independent evaluations.

The absence of a national information policy "reflects the discord, disharmony and even non-cooperation among various information centres, in addition to unspecified roles within the overall national set-up in this sector."

According to Dr. Nusseir, Jordan has a good infrastructure for the information technology sector and many information centres and leading libraries do not lack the equipment and machinery to implement an automatic information system.

However, he said, the automation in the information field was very limited, and there were still obstacles in providing suitable programmes to the operations, in addition to the cost and effort needed to feed in, revise, edit and correct the information.

Dr. Nusseir stressed that training in the information sector was adequately available at various educational levels and was a reflection of qualified labour capabilities in the Kingdom but, he pointed out, the distribution of qualified personnel should be examined as the public sector somewhat lacks the right cadre in the

information field.

Other elements mentioned to be hampering the progress of information science in Jordan were:

— Insufficient financial capabilities to develop and upgrade information sources.

— Ineffectiveness of registering and controlling the bibliographical process to publish and distribute local intellectual material, especially scientific thought.

— Difficulty in implementing the issue of writing and publishing rights.

— Absence of nationally-adopted bases for classification, indexing and coding.

— Absence of national data-transmission network.

Dr. Nusseir highlighted the current role of information in the world today by pointing out that 50 per cent of the labour force in industrial nations works in the information and information-related sectors which carry a 50-60 per cent share in the gross national product of these countries.

He estimated the size of the global information sector to be in

the hundreds of billions of dollars, noting that the information sector includes the information content on one hand and the technology information on the other.

He defined technology information as being the medium in usage to obtain, keep or transmit information.

Dr. Nusseir elaborated that the information industry has three main divisions: the institutions which deal with information through production, publication and utilisation; the information market where the exchange takes place between the producer and the user; the group of companies and institutions which invested in equipping and structuring the information to suffice the needs of the society.

Dr. Nusseir said information affects the national economy in two ways: producing and publishing information (in itself an economic function) and increasing productivity, improving quality and upgrading the level of performance through implementing better knowledge.

Australia cuts credit rates

SYDNEY (R) — The Reserve Bank of Australia cut official interest rates Friday to help revive Australia's flagging economic recovery and bolster business confidence.

The central Reserve Bank trimmed its official cash rate to 4.75 per cent from 5.25 per cent, the 15th such cut since January 1990 and the second since Paul Keating won election.

"This action, which follows deliberations of the board (of the Reserve Bank) and consultations with the treasurer, is in response to continuing slow growth and low inflation," said Reserve Bank Governor Bernie Fraser.

Mr. Fraser said most indicators of the economy suggested the country's economic recovery was growing at a modest rate. Annualised output expanded by 2.5 per cent in the March quarter while unemployment was firmly lodged above 11 per cent.

"Consumer spending has been restrained and business investment is not yet providing the impetus necessary to sustain a solid recovery," Mr. Fraser said.

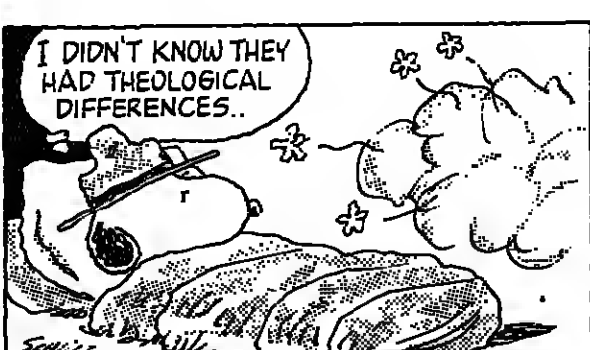
Peanuts



Andy Capp



Mutt'n'Jeff



JUMBLE. THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME by Henri Arnold and Bob Lee

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

TUSEG

VELED

VENAHE

FOUNSI

Answer here: _____

(Answers tomorrow)

Yesterday's Jumbles: RHYME AUOIT BUSHIL EMPLOY

Answer: Often leads to a tough steak—A BUM STEER

Izetbegovic rejects compromise plan; U.N. peacekeeper killed

SARAJEVO (Agencies) — Military commanders of Bosnia's three warring factions met to discuss imposing the latest ceasefire shortly after a Spanish peacekeeping soldier died and 17 others were wounded in an artillery attack Friday.

Bosnia's political leaders meeting in Geneva had ordered the ceasefire Thursday, but the peace talks suffered a setback when Bosnia's Muslim President Alija Izetbegovic rejected a compromise aimed at ending the republic's 16-month-old war.

Mr. Izetbegovic told reporters Friday he did not agree to a plan under which post-war Bosnia would become "the United Republics of Bosnia and Herzegovina," although diplomats cautioned against regarding this as an outright rejection and said serious negotiations were continuing.

The night-time shelling of the Spanish U.N. soldiers, who were in their sleeping quarters in the central Bosnian town of Jahorina, was the latest in a series of attacks on peacekeeping troops in Bosnia in recent days.

The commander of U.N. forces in Yugoslavia, General Jean Cot, expressed his "horror and dismay" at the incident and ordered an investigation to determine who was responsible.

U.N. troops did not return fire or otherwise retaliate, despite a threat to do so from the U.N. Bosnia commander, General Francis Brigueumont, after French U.N. soldiers were shelled in Sarajevo last weekend.

Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadzic, who initially accused Muslim forces of staging the attack, said Friday that Serb gun-

ners may have fired at the French by mistake.

"The commander of the brigade which operates in the area from which the attack was possibly launched has already been discharged and at this moment the persons who are suspected to be responsible are being arrested," Mr. Karadzic said in a letter to world leaders.

Gen. Cot said the investigation into the shelling of the Spanish troops would show whether the Bosnian military commanders who gathered at Sarajevo Airport were serious in their desire to stop fighting.

The commanders — Bosnian Serb General Ratko Mladic, Bosnian Croat General Milivoj Petkovic and Rasin Delic, commander of the Muslim-held Bosnian government forces — arrived at the airport in separate armoured vehicles.

The meeting was chaired by Gen. Cot, who was accompanied by Gen. Brigueumont.

The Belgrade-based Tanjug News Agency reported that the Bosnian Serb army had been ordered to halt combat activities from noon (1000 GMT) Friday.

The army's deputy commander, General Milan Gvero, was quoted as saying his forces would respect the truce but did not rule out the right to self-defence.

Earlier Friday, shelling erupted in Sarajevo and on battle fronts to the north of the capital. But other reports indicated the capital and the northern front around Brcko were quiet.

Gen. Brigueumont said the Geneva negotiators had asked that all Bosnian military leaders and the United Nations should meet everyday in Sarajevo to determine who was responsible for any ceasefire violations.

"Today is the day that combat activities are to cease. The investigation into the shelling incident in Jahorina should be a first test of the cooperation of each party to participate in this process," Gen. Brigueumont said in statement.

"Moreover, we trust it will be an important test of the goodwill of each party to actively participate in the peace process overall."

Mr. Izetbegovic's remarks in Geneva contradicted statements by other members of his presidency that the Muslim leadership would accept the union plan, but with changes.

Diplomats cautioned against regarding Mr. Izetbegovic's rejection as outright, saying that the presidency had tabled amendments to the plan and seemed to be negotiating seriously.

Mediators Lord Owen and Thorvald Stoltenberg presented the union plan Thursday in a bid to cut through rival demands that Bosnia should become a loose confederation of ethnic mini-states, as proposed by Serbs and Croats, or a federation with a stronger central government as suggested by the Muslims.

The idea has been largely welcomed by the Bosnian Serbs, who control 70 per cent of Bosnia.

Agreement on constitutional arrangements for post-war Bosnia would be a big step forward, though the rival factions would still have to agree on a territorial carve-up.

Meanwhile the U.N. military spokesman in Sarajevo said

Thursday U.N. forces in Bosnia do not need air cover to fulfil their mission now and hope it will never have to be used.

Commander Barry Frewer also cautioned Western powers against mounting air strikes against Bosnian Serbs, saying that only the commander of U.N. forces on the ground had the authority to request and recommend air cover for his troops.

Mr. Frewer's remarks in a group of reporters appeared designed to play down speculation that air strikes by NATO warplanes on the United Nations' behalf may be imminent.

The United States is seeking NATO and Russian agreement for the use of air strikes to force Bosnian Serbs to halt their attacks on Sarajevo, a U.S. State official said Friday.

Consultations are under way with Britain and France and will follow during the weekend with Spain, the Netherlands, Germany and Russia as well as with members of Congress, said the official speaking only on condition of anonymity.

If the allies agree, the air campaign would be a significant step beyond plans to use air strikes to protect United Nations peacekeeping forces in Bosnia.

The official said the move toward military action was an acknowledgement that "the diplomatic track" had failed to secure safe areas for the Bosnian Muslims.

He said that the allies could conduct a far more aggressive air campaign than previously contemplated, striking at Serbian positions without waiting for further provocation.

Victorious Liberal-Democrat candidate Diana Maddock is all smiles early 30 July as the vote in the Christchurch by-election overturned a Conservative safe-seat for more than 80 years and was the largest upset to the conservatives since World War II. Diana Maddock won 62 per cent of the vote. Left, is her husband Robert. (AFP photo).



Victorious Liberal-Democrat candidate Diana Maddock is all smiles early 30 July as the vote in the Christchurch by-election overturned a Conservative safe-seat for more than 80 years and was the largest upset to the conservatives since World War II. Diana Maddock won 62 per cent of the vote. Left, is her husband Robert. (AFP photo).

Major's party admits bad poll defeat

CHRISTCHURCH, England (R) — Britain's ruling Conservative Party suffered its biggest defeat at a parliamentary by-election for nearly 50 years Friday, capping a disastrous year for Prime Minister John Major's government.

The centrist Liberal Democrats routed the Conservatives in one of their safest seats with a 35 per cent swing, the biggest since World War II.

A conservative majority of 23,015 at the April 1992 general election in Christchurch was turned into a victory for Liberal Democrat Diana Maddock by a margin of 15,427 votes.

Conservatives acknowledged the result reflected deep dissatisfaction with a government which has suffered crisis after crisis in the past 15 months.

"It's a very bad result and there's no question about that," said Conservative Party Chairman Sir Norman Fowler.

The result cut the governing party's majority to 17 in the 651-seat parliament, piling pressure on Mr. Major as he struggled to heal splits in his party and restore his eroded authority.

Sir Norman told BBC radio: "The voters have been affected

by the image of us as a disunited party over the last nine to 12 months. Happily that is now behind us although it's unreal to think the public would appreciate that yet."

"This is a verdict on past events and not on the future," said Sir Marcus Fox, a key power broker in the party. "There are lessons to be learnt and the public have not been impressed with us, there's too much evidence of a divided party."

Ms. Maddock, a 48-year-old teacher, said her victory was helped by Mr. Major's plans to introduce a consumer tax on heating fuel next year, a deeply unpopular move among old people who make up one third of the Christchurch electorate.

"Change your policies or change your job," she told Mr. Major in her victory speech after becoming the Liberal Democrats' 22nd member of parliament.

Sir Norman denied the voters of Christchurch, a genteel seaside town which had voted "Tory" for 84 years, had given Mr. Major, the most unpopular premier to modern times, a slap on the face.

He said Mr. Major had shown brave leadership by forcing the bill to ratify the Maastricht Treaty through parliament via a confi-

dence motion last week, outsmarting Conservative rebels who had dogged the bill's passage every step of the way.

The Conservatives, in office since 1979, have not won a by-election since February 1989. In May they lost the Newbury by-election to the Liberal Democrats after a 28 per cent swing.

However, Sir Norman pointed out that although his party lost seven seats at by-elections in the 1987-1992 parliament, they won them all back at the April 1992 election.

The main opposition, Labour Party suffered the ignominy of losing the £500 (£750) deposit necessary to enter the by-election because it did not win a large enough share of the vote, a repeat of their dismal Newbury performance.

Party leaders insisted Labour was still the only viable alternative to the Conservatives. They called on Mr. Major to change tack and listen to the people.

"This is a devastating rejection of John Major," said Labour leader John Smith. "No matter how desperate John Major may be to put all this behind him during the holiday period we will not allow him to draw any lines in the sand."

China becoming country of personal pagers

PEKING (R) — China's phenomenal economic growth is being outpaced only by a rise in the number of people wearing personal pagers. By June 30 the number of pager users in China had reached 2.21 million, up from none seven years ago, the Xinhua News Agency said. Pagers are fast becoming a necessity in China, a country where private telephones are still very rare and expensive. At present, 1,075 Chinese cities and towns have opened paging services, the official agency said. In Peking alone there are 300,000 users, double the number last year. Cinema showings are constantly interrupted by the sound of pagers, leading to the popularity of silent, vibrating models. For the true nouveau riche, however, a pager is now passé. Only a portable telephone will do as a sign of wealth.

Thai minister says no to Madonna show

BANGKOK (R) — Pop idol Madonna will not be allowed to strut her stuff in front of hundreds of thousands of adoring Bangkok fans because it would offend Thai ethics and culture, a minister has ruled. "If she strips off her clothes in front of the audience, could we tolerate that?" Education Minister Sampan Thongsamak was quoted in Thursday newspapers as asking. "That would be against Thai people's ethics and culture and totally unacceptable." Madonna would definitely not be allowed to perform at the huge National Stadium where Michael Jackson is due to appear on Aug. 25, he said, although she could hold her show in a smaller, more intimate venue like a theatre. Madonna, who has tested the limits of what is acceptable onstage with her sexually graphic performances and provocative outfits, is said to be considered an Asian tour with Bangkok on the itinerary. "It's in the works," said Ray Luna, sales manager for Tero Entertainment Holding Co. which is arranging Michael Jackson's show. If Madonna is put off Bangkok because of the ministry's restrictions, Mr. Luna said: "It's a shame. There's nothing wrong with a world class act."

Elton John sells his records for AIDS charity

LONDON (R) — British pop star Elton John's record collection was sold at auction Thursday, raising £181,000 (£271,000) for AIDS and HIV sufferers, auctioneers Sotheby's said. The collection of 48,000 records was bought by a private collector in St. Louis, Missouri. Sotheby's said. The proceeds will go to British AIDS charity the Terrence Higgins Trust. Rare items in the collection include demonstration discs by pop stars such as David Bowie and Genesis. Others bear the name Reg. Dwight, John's real name. John, a committed campaigner against AIDS, has spearheaded efforts in the artistic community to raise money for AIDS research and treatment after seeing many of his colleagues struck by the disease. In November last year John launched his own charity, the Elton John AIDS Foundation, and has also given concert proceeds to AIDS research.

Trump to build casino on Gulf of Mexico

GULFPORT, Mississippi (AFP) — New York tycoon Donald Trump unveiled an estimated \$45-million plan Thursday to build a casino on the Gulf of Mexico. The Trump Ocean Club Casino will be built on a 3,150-acre site (3,907-square-feet) site rented from the Marine Life Oceanarium, provided Mr. Trump succeeds in obtaining a Mississippi licence for the gambling palace. If it goes ahead, the complex will create some 600 jobs.

DNA proves man has child despite vasectomy

LONDON (R) — DNA tests helped prove that a man had fathered a child despite having had a seemingly successful vasectomy, the British Medical Journal reported Friday. The man had a vasectomy in 1987 and semen samples taken soon after showed no sperm. But the man's wife became pregnant in 1990 and gave birth in 1991. Repeated tests showed the man had only a few non-motile sperm, which cannot swim and therefore are assumed to be incapable of causing pregnancy. But DNA tests established that the man was indeed the father of the child. Doctors at London Hospital Medical College, who wrote the report, said the case showed the need for care in deciding whether a man was infertile or a vasectomy had been effective.

Ex-premiers, ministers cited in Italian probe

MILAN (AFP) — Former Italian Premier Bettino Craxi and seven others are under investigation over alleged bribes paid to politicians following a multi-million-dollar takeover scandal, judicial officials said Friday.

The Enimont scandal, already blamed for the suicides of two of Italy's leading business tycoons, involves allegations that 150 billion lire (\$94 million) were paid in bribes to political parties following Enimont's overpriced takeover by the state energy conglomerate ENI in 1990.

Meanwhile in Rome a probe was launched against Culture Minister Alberto Fortini and former Prime Minister Giovanni Goria following the discovery of alleged "irregularities" over the purchase and resale of a villa, judicial officials in the capital said.

The Rome probe makes Mr. Fortini the first minister in Carlo Azeglio Ciampi's government, which was formed in April, to be placed under investigation.

Precise details of the investigation and accusations against Mr. Fortini and Christian Democrat Goria — premier from July 1987 to March 1988 and convicted of corruption under the Milan-based Clean Hands investigation into illegal funding of political parties — are still unclear.

Mr. Craxi resigned as Socialist Party leader earlier this year after coming under investigation in the Clean Hands probe.

Among those also being probed in Milan are Arnaldo Forlani, former national secretary of the Christian Democrat Party, former Christian Democrat Budget Minister Paolo Cirino Pomicino, and former Socialist Justice Minister Claudio Martelli.

Also under investigation are the secretaries of three smaller parties which were in the same governing coalition during the period covering the bribery allegations.

They are Giorgio La Malfa of the Republican Party, Renato Altissimo of the Liberal Party and Carlo Vizzini of the Social Democrats. Severino Citaristi, former Christian Democrat administrative secretary, is also being probed.

The eighth man under investigation in Milan is former Christian Democrat administrative secretary Severino Citaristi.

All eight currently enjoy parliamentary immunity from prosecution which will have to be lifted by their fellow deputies before they can be charged.

The Enimont probe has already seen the suicides of former Ferruzzi-Montedison chief and international jet-setter Raul Gardini and ENI boss Gabriele Cagliari.

The two companies had joined forces to form Enimont in December 1988 aiming to set up a model chemicals concern with 50,000 staff and a turnover of 16,000 billion lire (\$11 billion).

NEWS IN BRIEF

Britain moves to muzzle media

LONDON (R) — The British government made its first move towards muzzling a prying press Friday with a proposed new privacy law, provoking the fury of populist tabloids which complained of a threat to democracy. Reacting to widespread concern about alleged media excesses, the government said it wanted to make "infringement of privacy," an offence, outlawing intrusion into an individual's family circumstances, health or love life. "The time has come to ensure that the law protects the privacy of everyone," said Lord MacKay, who as Lord Chancellor is head of Britain's judiciary and a member of the cabinet. Britain's circulation-hungry newspapers, especially the gossip tabloids, have been taken to task for their graphic exposes of royal indiscretions and ministerial misdemeanours. There has also been widespread concern at intrusion into the private sufferings of both celebrities and ordinary members of the public who found their troubles described to millions of readers of the mass-circulation press.

11 die in Sri Lanka revenge raids

COLOMBO (R) — At least 11 civilians, including a 12-month baby, have been killed and 10 others injured in bombing raids by Sri Lankan Air Force planes to avenge a Tamil rebel raid on army camp, residents said. They said the attacks Tuesday to the northern rebel stronghold of Jaffna were seen by many people as "revenge strikes" in retaliation for a raid on an army camp in the northeast Sunday which killed 56 people. On Wednesday, a clandestine radio station operated by Tamil rebels put the death toll from the attacks at five civilians. Five members of one family, including a baby killed in her cradle, died in the first attack at Thinnaveli which destroyed the house they were living in. Residents said two bombs dropped by fighter planes caused extensive damage to several houses. A third bomb did not explode and was taken away by Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam guerrillas. The second attack killed six people including three children at Truppalai and also damaged a nearby Hindu temple.

Russia to reinforce troops in Tajikistan

MOSCOW (R) — Russian President Boris Yeltsin has ordered that extra troops and weapons be sent to Russian forces policing the troubled border between Tajikistan and Afghanistan. A decree, published in full by ITAR-TASS News Agency Thursday, said Mr. Yeltsin would try to have Russian troops give the status of U.N. "blue helmet" peacekeepers. His application to the U.N. Security Council observers dispatched to the central Asian country, where Islamic rebels are waging a blow. The reinforcements, to both the Russian border troops and an army division based in Tajikistan, were part of an all-round plan to restore peace to the former Soviet republic.

Nepal King Inspects flood damage

KATHMANDU (AFP) — King Birendra and Queen Aishwarya Friday inspected areas affected by floods that have killed at least 2,000 people and left hundreds of thousands homeless, a Home Ministry source said. The royal couple visited the stricken areas of Chitauri, Sarlahi and Rautahat accompanied by Home Minister Sher Bahadur Deupa, chairman of the Central Relief Committee. Groups of half-naked and hungry flood victims approached the king's helicopter on landing, hoping for food and relief materials, said an official who asked not to be named. A spokesman for the Nepal Sadbhavana Party (NSP) said relief work was not satisfactory and that people in many villages had nothing to eat and were forced to drink the dirty flood water to survive.

Bangladesh battles post-flood diseases

DHAKA (AFP) — Authorities have rushed medical teams into flooded Bangladesh districts to curb the spread of water-borne diseases as newspapers reported Friday an acute scarcity of water in the affected areas. A large number of medical teams are working round the clock in the affected areas, including 120 in one of the worst-hit, northern Natrakona district, the Bangladesh News Agency (BSS) said. The floods affected an estimated 25 million people in this calamity-prone South Asian country of 110 million people, and floods and related incidents have so far left unofficially 371 people dead. The official toll was 109.

Ukraine: SS-24s not included in treaty

KIEV (R) — Ukraine's President Leonid Kravchuk said Friday that the START-1 arms treaty which has yet to be ratified by parliament did not include the 46 SS-24 multiple-warhead missiles on its soil. Ukraine has in all 176 strategic nuclear missiles left over from the break-up of the Soviet Union — the 46 SS-24s and 130 SS-19s. Mr. Kravchuk said the issue of the SS-24s would have to be settled by separate agreement involving Ukraine, the United States and Russia.

U.K. high court rejects Maastricht appeal

LONDON (R) — Britain's high court rejected a legal challenge Friday aimed at blocking British ratification of the Maastricht Treaty on European Union.

Counsel for Lord Rees-Mogg, a former editor of the Times newspaper who brought the challenge, said they would decide early next week whether to appeal.

Lord Rees-Mogg, who was not in court, contended the government had handed over key prerogative powers to the European parliament without British parliamentary approval.

"We're going to take time to consider the judgement and next week we will consider what we should do further," Lord Rees-Mogg's son Jacob said outside the court. "This is one step on what may be a long road or may not be."

If Lord Rees-Mogg decided to abandon his campaign, Prime Minister John Major would finally be able to ratify a treaty after 15 months of parliamentary turmoil which threatened to tear apart the ruling Conservative Party. The court of appeal has set aside the week of Aug. 9 to hear any appeal.

Mr. Jacob denied his father had started the case to embarrass Mr. Major. "There is no question of my father doing it to cause political mischief," he said.

Financial considerations, rather than the comprehensive ruling against him, could be pivotal. Costs of the case, estimated at nearly £100,000 (£148,000) were awarded against Lord Rees-Mogg who is currently in Switzerland.

Russian parliament to convene amid fresh turmoil

MOSCOW (AFP) — Russian lawmakers prepared Friday for a stormy emergency parliamentary session set for Saturday amid a botched rouble banknote recall and President Boris Yeltsin's controversial sacking of the security minister.

The parliamentary leadership called back deputies from vacation officially to debate a Yeltsin decree prolonging a state of emergency in the northern Caucasus but under parliamentary rules, lawmakers can raise any issue once the assembly is open.

Speaker Ruslan Khasbulatov, Mr. Yeltsin's chief rival, began laying the groundwork Friday for the political battle by agreeing to an interview on Russian Television to discuss "the situation in the country." Mr. Khasbulatov's spokesman Constantin Zlobin said.

The session was scheduled to begin one week after a surprise central bank decision to withdraw billions of pre-1993 rouble bank-

notes from circulation, a move that caused mass confusion among Russians and were forced to wait hours in queues to swap the invalid roubles.

It also came on the heels of Mr. Yeltsin's decision to fire Security Minister Viktor Barannikov for his mismanagement of the crisis on the Tajik-Afghan border and for breach of ethics.

The parliamentary leadership declared illegal the presidential decree sacking Mr. Barannikov, arguing that Mr. Yeltsin must seek parliamentary approval to remove the security minister from his post.

The praesidium also moved to lift restrictions on exchanging banknotes and stated that all stores and services should be instructed to accept the invalidated roubles as a means of payment until their gradual withdrawal from circulation is completed.

In a statement, parliamentary

leaders said the central bank decision violated a Russian law on currency regulations.

Thousands of customers Monday were turned away from savings banks that did not receive sufficient stocks of new banknotes, prompting Mr. Yeltsin to intervene and ease restrictions on the rouble swap.

Senior government ministers admitted that the decree came too late and that the "political and moral damage" had already been done.

"The moment of truth has finally come," commented Friday the newspaper Rossiyskaya Gazeta, mouthpiece of conservatives and pro-Communists.

"It has come for millions of Russians who will not give one kopeck to a government that has brutally attacked their purses with the deceitfulness of Afghan Mujahedeen attacking a border-post," the newspaper wrote.

The newspaper was referring to

the guerrilla warfare being waged against a pro-Communist government in Tajikistan by Tajik rebels, supported by Afghan Mujahedeen.

In closing the parliamentary session, Mr. Khasbulatov warned deputies that "sudden turn of events were possible," advising lawmakers to be prepared to return to Moscow at any time.

The emergency session was called after Mr. Yeltsin managed to make serious political headway since his victory in the April referendum in pushing for constitutional reform.

Mr. Yeltsin and his team of reformers had put in motion an elaborate plan aimed at scrapping the hardline parliament by calling fresh elections this fall.

The rouble fiasco and the controversy surrounding the security minister's sacking however could be used by the opposition to stir anti-government feeling only months before the campaign was to get under way.



Sampras, Courier, Becker eliminated

MONTREAL (R) — Wimbledon champion Pete Sampras and third-seeded Boris Becker were eliminated Thursday at the 1.65 million Player's Ltd. International Tennis Tournament.

In yet another upset, second-seeded Jim Courier was ambushed 6-3, 6-2 by Swede Mikael Pernfors, ranked 45th in the world.

Fourth-seeded Ivan Lendl and 11th-seeded Andre Agassi moved into the quarterfinals. Courier's loss followed two defeats in the finals of the French Open and Wimbledon.

The top-seeded Sampras, ranked number-one in the world, looked lethargic in a 7-6, (8-6) 6-3 loss to New Zealand's Brett Steven.

Becker tried valiantly, but lost a 7-5, 7-6 (7-3), third-round duel to 13th-seeded Todd Martin.

"I simply played a bad match on a bad day," said Sampras. "I'm going to wake up tomorrow and it's a new day. He played good tennis so he deserved to win the match."

The seventh-ranked Lendl posted a 6-7 (9-7), 6-1, 6-2 victory over Aaron Krickstein. Agassi, defeated fifth-seeded Michael Chang 7-6 (7-3) 6-3.

Steven, sensing Sampras was having an off-day and was impatient on-court, played smart tennis. He kept the ball deep and slow, never giving Sampras any pace to get into a groove.

"It feels very good but I think it will sink in a little better in a little while," said Steven, of beating the best in the game. "I'm in a little bit of a daze right now."

Martinez advances
In Stratton Mountain, Vermont top seeded Conchita Martinez led the way into the quarterfinals of the 375,000 Women's Hardcourt Tennis Tournament by easing past Jeri Ingram of the United States 6-1, 6-1 Thursday.

Joining Martinez in the final eight of the week-long hardcourt tournament were third seeded Helena Sukova of the Czech Republic, fourth seeded Manuela Maleeva-Fragniere of Switzerland and fifth seeded Zina Garrison Jackson of the U.S.

Martinez needed just 43 minutes to overpower Ingram as the Spanish star took leads of 5-0 in both sets. Ingram managed to break serve in the fourth game of the first set and in the second set she held serve in the fourth game to get on the scoreboard.

Sukova struggled for nearly two hours to beat veteran Kathy Rinaldi of the United States 3-6, 7-6 (7-5), 6-1. Rinaldi was just two points away from victory at 5-5 in the tiebreaker, but lost the next two points. In the third set, Rinaldi lost the last five games.

GOREN BRIDGE
WITH OMAR SHARIF & TANNAN HIRSCH
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BRIDGE IS A TOUGH GAME
North-South vulnerable. North deals.

WEST
♠ 10
♥ 9 8 2
♦ 8 7 6 5 3
♣ K J

EAST
♠ Q J 9 8 5 4
♥ 7 5
♦ Q 10 3
♣ A 10 9 2

SOUTH
♠ A 6 2
♥ J 10 8 4 3
♦ J 7 5
♣ Q 4

The bidding:
North East South West
1 NT 2+ 3+ Pass
4+ Pass Pass Pass

Opening lead: King of ♠
When four experts sit down to play rubber bridge, life is never easy. Here's a typical example of the thrust and parry that can occur at the table.

Note that East-West showed no inclination to sacrifice against four hearts even though the vulnerability was favorable. Since North-South would still be 3-to-1 favorites to win

the rubber, almost any price would be too high.

West led the king of spades, and it might seem impossible for declarer to fail to come to 10 tricks as the cards lie. South took the ace of spades, drew trumps in two rounds, and led a low club from dummy.

East shot up with the king of clubs and, instead of cashing the queen of spades, underled both honors! West was rather surprised to find that the ten of spades won the second trick in the suit, but did not neglect to switch to a low diamond.

By now, South was beginning to get the idea of what was afoot, but still elected to go with the odds and play the overcall for the ace of diamonds. That allowed East to win the queen and return a diamond for a one-trick set.

Yes, declarer could have made an overcall by going up with the king of diamonds—the club suit will yield two discards when East's jack drops. Nevertheless, it is this sort of desperate defense which rubber bridge addicts insist make the money game more exciting than tournament play. You'll get no argument from this department.

Christie faces tougher test in Cologne

BONN (R) — Even with the cash from Friday's showdown with Carl Lewis tucked reassuringly under his mattress, Linford Christie may struggle to sleep before one of his toughest races of the year in Cologne Sunday.

The British Olympic sprint champion will clash with in-form American champion Andre Cason for the first time this season at the Cologne Grand Prix.

The lucrative 100 metres duel with world champion Lewis at Gateshead in Northern England has attracted all the publicity and the money.

Lewis and Christie have been paid a total of 300,000 for the showdown.

But the race on the banks of the Rhine will say more about the 100 metres form book before next month's World Championships in Stuttgart.

After a late start to the season, the 33-year-old Christie has been in dominant form in the past month.

But Cason blasted ahead of world record holder Lewis and Olympic bronze medalist Dennis Mitchell on his way to a wind-assisted 9.85 seconds at the U.S. championships in June.

After beating Lewis again in Lausanne earlier this month, Cason planned to take on Christie in Oslo July 10.

The American, nine years younger than his British rival, ran the heats but was forced to pull out of the final because of a virus as Christie took the honours.

Christie has had memories of the Mungersdorfer Stadium after suffering a defeat by Nigerian Olajide Adeniken last year just a week after the end of the Barcelona Olympics.

World Cup qualifiers

Brazil face crucial match; Argentina have tricky start

SAN CRISTOBAL, Venezuela (R) — Brazil, with one miserly point from their first two World Cup qualifying games, face a crucial match away to Venezuela Sunday.

Anything other than a win will leave Brazil, the only country to have taken part in all 14 World Cup finals, in serious danger of not qualifying for the 1994 tournament in the United States.

Trainer Carlos Alberto Parreira also knows after a humiliating loss to Bolivia, a draw or defeat in Venezuela is likely to spell the end of his 21-month reign.

The Brazilian media has been unanimous this week that Parreira's job is hanging by a thread and that either former coach Tele Santana or Carlos Alberto Silva will replace him in the event of another disaster.

A 0-0 draw against Ecuador followed by a 2-0 defeat in Bolivia last Sunday have left Brazil fourth in South America Group B and Parreira as one of the most hated men in Brazil.

He has temporarily deposed Brazil President Itamar Franco as newspaper cartoonists' favourite caricature.

But Parreira remains assured that the unthinkable — Brazil not qualifying — will not happen. "Everybody in the World wants to see Brazil at the World Cup and I'm sure we will be there," he said.

Groping for a winning combination, Parreira Thursday changed half his starting lineup for Sunday's crucial World Cup qualifying match against Venezuela.

Parreira benched Cafu, Valber, Leonardo, Luiz Henrique, Zinho and Muller — all starters in Brazil's disastrous 2-0 loss to Bolivia last Sunday.

Branco, Dunga, Elivelton and Careca will replace the out-of-favour starters along with Jorginho, who came in as a substitute last week, and Ricardo Rocha.

"I changed because Brazil has to play on the attack," said Parreira, adding that the return of lateral defences Branco and Jorginho gave the team more firepower.

Brazilian Federation President Ricardo Teixeira met privately with Parreira at training camp for more than two hours. After the meeting, the coach announced the new lineup.

"When Brazil spends 90 minutes against Bolivia and shoots just two goals on goal, something is very wrong," said Teixeira, who is the son-in-law of FIFA President Joao Havelange.

"Brazil will win Sunday," he said firmly. "I accept nothing less."

In an unusual move, Parreira Thursday announced Brazil's starting lineup for Sunday's game — Claudio Taffarel, Jorginho, Ricardo Rocha, Marcelo Santos and Branco; Mauro Silva,

Dunga, Rai and Elivelton, Bebeto and Careca. The only question mark was Ricardo Rocha, who is recovering from an ankle injury. If he can't play, Antonio Carlos is expected to start.

Venezuela, where soccer comes a poor third to baseball and basketball, have not won an international since 1989 and, with only one win ever in the World Cup, are regarded as the whipping boys of South American soccer.

They opened their campaign with a dismal 7-1 defeat at home to Bolivia.

But last Sunday, they lost only 1-0 against much-fancied Uruguay, doing enough to earn a draw, and show they could complicate life for Brazil.

Striker Jose Dolgetta was their top scorer in the recent Copa America with four goals while his partner, Belgian-based Stalin Rivas, is a constant threat with his blistering left foot shot.

Argentina meet Peru
Argentina, whose rugged and defensive style has made them unpopular opponents, begin their attempt to qualify for the 1994 World Cup with a tricky away match against Peru Sunday.

Captain and central defender Oscar Ruggeri is poised to break the Argentine record for the number of national team appearances in what will be his 82nd full international.

Ruggeri and his team mates can expect a hostile reception in Lima's 40,000 capacity national stadium. It will not be a new experience for them.

They won the recent Copa America tournament in Ecuador but found the crowds sided with their opponents in every game.

Their negative play was widely criticised as they won two games in penalty shoot-outs and scored only six goals in six matches.

It was the same story in the 1990 World Cup. Despite finishing runners-up, Argentina made few friends as they won twice on penalties and topped the tables for the number of cards received — 22 yellow and three red — and number of fouls in the competition.

The Argentines are playing in South America Group A — a tough line-up including Colombia and Paraguay.

Only the winners automatically qualify for the 1994 finals in the United States, while the runners-up play off against either Australia or Canada.

Peruvian soccer has slumped since the team appeared in three out of four World Cups between 1970 and 1982.

The team reached the quarter-finals of the Copa America but lost 3-0 to Uruguay in a friendly two weeks ago.

India to host Davis Cup on grass

NEW DELHI (AFP) — India, hoping to enter the Davis Cup final for a third time, have chosen the grasscourts of Chandigarh to host their semifinal against Australia September 24-26.

R.K. Khanna, president of the All India Tennis Association, said Thursday that non-playing captain Naresh Kumar and his top players Leander Paes and Ramesh Krishnan and plumped for the northern city's grass surface.

Chandigarh holds happy memories for India, who beat Japan there in a zonal tie in 1990.

India, who last entered the Davis Cup final in 1987 by beating Australia in Australia, before losing to Sweden, are enjoying a dream run this year. They upset France 3-2 in the quarter-finals.

India, yet to win the cup, do not have a single player ranked among world's top 200.



Boston Celtics team captain Reggie Lewis is all smiles at a press conference after doctors approved his return to play after he collapsed on court during a playoff match April 29 (AFP file photo)

Reggie, I wish I would spend more time with you," Brown said, as his head sank and he began to sob.

Lewis was 1 week from medical test of his heart

When he died, Reggie Lewis was one week away from a medical test of his heart's ability to handle competitive basketball.

He was two weeks away from meeting with Boston Celtics officials about providing a cardiologist and defibrillator, which shocks the heart into regular beats, at all of his games and practices.

But Lewis died before he could keep those appointments. He was stricken while shooting baskets at Brandeis University in Waltham.

"Reggie had not made his decision to return to basketball because his testing was not complete," his widow said in a statement Thursday. "Reggie did everything that he could to avoid this day ever coming."

Details were revealed of his search for answers after he received conflicting opinions on what caused him to collapse during a playoff game April 29.

Lewis, 27, consulted four heart specialists in Southern California for several days early last month. They found a heart abnormality, according to the statement read by Jerome Stanley, one of Lewis' agents.

"The doctors concluded, although they believed that he could eventually return to controlled conditional competitive basketball, they did not think that he should do so until he had undergone a monitoring of his

heart function while playing competitive basketball," Donna Harris Lewis said.

Lewis planned to undergo that monitoring next week in Baltimore, his home town.

The first diagnosis Lewis received after three days at New England Baptist Hospital was that he had a life-threatening heart ailment.

He switched to Brigham and women's hospital for more tests. Dr. Gilbert Mudge, a cardiologist who supervised his care there, diagnosed Lewis with a less harmful neurological condition and said he was optimistic Lewis could return to basketball under medical supervision.

The doctors in California felt that although the abnormality they found "could have caused the fainting incident, so could have the combination of factors enunciated by Dr. Mudge," Mrs. Lewis said.

She added that one of the tests Mudge administered duplicated the collapse. His opinion "was the best guess until we were able to duplicate the symptoms of fainting while under the stress of physical activity," she added.

"Until that time, Reggie would not, and did not, engage in any strenuous competitive basketball situations," his wife said.

"Reggie's death occurred while he was shooting baskets, not exerting energy in a competitive basketball situation," she added.

"He had done the same level of activity, which did not violate any of the doctors' opinion of safe activity, several times recently in activities ranging from shooting baskets to playing with our son."

Jupina top qualifier for Europe highboard final

SHEFFIELD (R) — Elena Jupina gave Ukraine a flying start to the European Swimming Championships Thursday by leading the qualifiers for the Women's Platform Diving final.

Jupina produced the top-scoring efforts in each of the last three rounds of the six-dives series on the 10-metre highboard to establish a big psychological advantage for the final.

She outscored former European champion Ute Wetzig by more than 20 points to encourage Ukrainian hopes of their first

major championships title in the pool now that the Soviet Union has broken up and the Commonwealth of Independent States has faded away.

Jupina amassed 321.84 points, with the day's highest mark of 67.86 for her final effort, a backward piked dive with 2-1/2 somersaults.

Wetzig, who won gold for East Germany in 1989 and bronze for United Germany in 1991, led for the first three rounds and finished with 299.10 points.

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Japan coalition braces for power; LDP leader elected

Combined agency dispatches

TOKYO — The anti-corruption campaigner poised to become Japan's next prime minister began preparing Friday for a coalition government to replace the long-ruling Liberal Democratic Party (LDP).

"Political reform remains our top priority but we must be ready to tackle all the issues as vigorously and effectively as possible," an upbeat Morihiro Hosokawa told reporters.

The former provincial governor, whose meteoric rise to the top has ended the cozy certainties of Japanese politics, is not expected officially to announce any cabinet posts until after parliament has confirmed him as prime minister.

LDP officials said parliament would be convened next Thursday, with the vote taking place some days later.

A coalition of eight parties with a majority in parliament's lower house chose Mr. Hosokawa, 55, as its leader on Thursday. Meanwhile, the LDP, adapting to the unaccustomed role of main opposition party, elected Yoshi Kono Friday as its new president, the first holder of the post who will not automatically become prime minister.

Mr. Kono, outgoing government spokesman and a champion of younger LDP reformers, defeated veteran Michio Watanabe 208 to 159 in a ballot of party lawmakers from both houses and delegates from regional chapters.

The mood during the ballot was one of defiance and scorn for the coalition "upstarts," on the verge of turning the LDP out of office for the first time since its formation in 1955.

Campaign posters from the



Yoshi Kono

July 18 general election that robbed the LDP of its majority still decorated the walls.

"The eight-party coalition won't bring stability to Japan, there will be another election before long," said one elderly delegate.

Nonetheless, it was the first time that the LDP, brought low by public anger over its backroom deals and corrupt ways, had elected a leader without horse-trading among its quarrelsome factions.

The LDP is seeking to freshen its image by electing Mr. Kono, a relatively young reformist leader as its president.

Three independents joined the LDP camp Friday, raising the number of its seats in the 511-seat lower house to 230, compared with the 255 seats held by the coalition. Remaining seats are held by independents and the Japan Communist Party.

Because the dominant partners of the coalition are former Liberal Democrats, no major changes in Japan's foreign or economic

policies are expected right away.

The coalition's leaders have said their first priority would be to clean up endemic political corruption.

But Japanese commentators who had wistfully viewed U.S. President Bill Clinton's election as a political sea change Japan might never see were uneasy about tapping a young, former state governor to head their own government.

"Some anxieties remain about a prime minister of unknown capabilities, although we would like to basically praise the bold selection," the Asahi national newspaper said.

Mr. Hosokawa, who has never held a cabinet post and who launched his populist Japan New Party just 14 months ago, appeared to inspire little confidence among Japanese used to seeing Liberal Democratic elders in the prime minister's post.

"He is a lot better skier than he is a politician," said Masaji Shinagawa, president of the Japan Association of Corporate Executives.

Outgoing Prime Minister Kiichi Miyazawa, 73, has held almost all the important positions in the cabinet, including the foreign, finance and trade portfolios.

But Mr. Shinagawa said he hoped Mr. Hosokawa's coalition would enact political reforms and policy changes to liberalise Japan's economy.

The ideological divisions in the coalition, which includes three new conservative parties led by former Liberal Democrats and four established leftist and centrist opposition parties, raise questions about the likely stability of the future government.

The Liberal Democrats, by far



Morihiro Hosokawa

the largest single party, are likely to remain a powerful political force. Their legislators have close links with policy-making bureaucrats that will give them considerable leverage as an opposition party.

Boosting defence

Japan plans to beef up its armed forces further in the light of what it considers an unstable regional climate and the challenges posed by North Korea and the former Soviet Union, the Japan Defence Agency said Friday.

North Korea is "one of the regions in the world with the highest tension today," the agency warned in its annual white paper adopted Thursday by the cabinet.

The white paper also specifically pointed to concerns raised by the confused political situation in Russia, and China's continued modernisation of its armed forces.

While the government had adopted its defence programme in December, "it was judged that it is appropriate for Japan to continue to improve its defence capability," the agency's defence councillor, Masataka Suzuki, told reporters as he presented the white paper.

Africa Rights group accuses U.N. of abuses in Somalia

LONDON (Agencies) — The London-based group Africa Rights on Friday accused United Nations forces in Somalia of "grave violations of human rights," including gratuitous beating and killing of civilians.

In a report based on two five-week trips to Somalia by its staff during June and July, Africa Rights alleged that U.N. forces had fired at demonstrators on June 12-13, had attacked a hospital on June 17 and had killed unspecified civilians on July 2 and 6.

It criticised a U.S. air strike on a political meeting on July 12 among supporters of Mogadishu's main warlord Mohammed Farah Aided, in which it said that 54 Somalis had died.

The same figure was gathered from hospital sources by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and was far higher than the 18 given by U.N. military officials at the time.

It was the air attack, said the report, that led to the reprisal killing of four foreign journalists.

Africa Rights was particularly critical of Belgian U.N. troops based in the southern port of Kismayu.

Those soldiers, it said, had beaten several people, thrown seven children into a river, conducted body searches on local women and shot dead a carpenter making crutches for the ICRC.

African Rights, which was formed last December, said its staff had discerned a "deep and growing sense of outrage" against the U.N. force, UNOSOM II, even on the part of those Somalis who overtly endorse the political and humanitarian work of the United Nations.

Africa Rights alleged U.N. forces had unfairly detained scores of Somalis, evicted them from buildings which were then demolished to clear ground for U.N. camps and of exploding ordnance in the middle of the inland town of Belet Huen.

It praised the 200-strong Bosnian force based in the southern town of Bardere as the only group which had calmed insecurity, unfailingly helped humanitarian convoys and won popularity among local residents.

"The view... that Somali people are inherently aggressive and respect only superior force is shown to be nonsense by the Bosnians' remarkable demonstration of the possibility of conducting a hearts and minds campaign," it said.

Debate in U.S. Congress

In Washington, Clinton administration officials defended recent U.S.-led attacks in Somalia on Thursday against calls in Congress to withdraw U.S. troops because of the violence.

"We should support (U.N.) efforts to restore order to southern Mogadishu, including the use of force, where this is necessary and appropriate," Under-Secretary of State Peter Tarnoff told the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

Several Republicans said at separate hearings in the House of Representatives and the Senate that Somalis in Mogadishu are turning against U.S. forces because of the attacks so U.S. troops should be withdrawn.

"The American public will not support a strategy that seems to be turning American troops into objects of anger and attack," said

Representative Benjamin Gilman of New York, senior Republican on the House Foreign Affairs Committee.

"It is time for new thinking to break the gridlock of violence there and to bring home the U.S. military forces."

Several senators said the United States should stay firm in Somalia, however.

"For us now to say 'sorry, we are running into a few bumps along the road, we're going to hightail it out of here? I think would be absolutely irresponsible," said Senator Paul Simon, Democrat of Illinois.

Senator Nancy Kassebaum, Republican of Kansas, said, "It is essential that the United States stay the course in Somalia."

Loi knows nothing of recall

General Bruno Loi, the Italian officer at the centre of a row between Italy and the United Nations over the peacekeeping mission in Somalia, said Friday he knew nothing of plans to recall him early.

"I have heard nothing to that effect," the Italian news agency ANSA quoted Gen. Loi as saying.

He had been asked about reports he would be recalled before the scheduled end of his tour in September and that the 600 Italian troops in Mogadishu would be redeployed to other parts of Somalia.

The U.N. demanded the immediate recall of Gen. Loi earlier this month when a row blew up over the tactics used by the United Nations in Somalia. Italy said military action was taking priority over dialogue.

Iranian TV fires stars for wedding dance

TEHRAN (R) — Two of Iran's television's most popular entertainers have been sacked for dancing at a wedding which shocked Islamic lawmakers when they saw a film of the mixed gathering.

Mahmoud Shahrini and Javad Atashfarooz disappeared without explanation this week from "After the News," their nightly prime-time show of jokes and skits. But Deputy Ali Zadsar told the newspaper Kar Va Kargar Wednesday that he was shown a film of a wedding party was shown in a Majlis committee.

"The bride and most ladies were semi-nude. I saw a familiar face among the gentlemen — a co-host of the programme — who started dancing," Mr. Zadsar said. The show's other host also danced, he added. Mixed parties are banned under Iran's Islamic laws. Speaker Ali Akbar Nateq-Nouri told parliament Wednesday that two unnamed TV stars had been fired. After the News, launched last year, offered a change from state television's mostly drab fare and quickly became on the country's most popular shows.

Stuntman protest restriction

NICE, France (AP) — A disgruntled stuntman, angered by local authorities' refusal to let him hungee jump from an airplane, suspended himself 200 metres above a road — with enough food to last four days. Pierre Rosso, 56, eased himself off a bridge crossing over a highway between Nice and Monaco, suspending himself 20 metres below the bridge on a seat with some ropes. He said he would cut the ropes holding him if police or rescue workers attempted to reach him. French Civil Aviation Authorities had forbidden Mr. Rosso from hungee-jumping off a single-engine airplane at airshows instead of helicopters as Mr. Rosso has used in the past. Mr. Rosso claims to hold the world record for bungee-jumping with a leap of 700 metres.

Filipino lawmaker ousted for being U.S. citizen

MANILA (R) — A Philippine electoral tribunal has voted to oust a member of Congress after finding he was a naturalised American citizen, officials said. The tribunal, which settles poll disputes, voted 9-2 to disqualify Congressman Manol Sanchez, a member of a congressional coalition supporting President Fidel Ramos. An opponent protested against Mr. Sanchez's poll victory last year, saying the congressman was not qualified to run having acquired American citizenship in 1965 when he was living in the United States. "Our finding is that he lost Philippine citizenship when he became an American citizen by naturalisation," tribunal officer and Congressman David Ponce De Leon said by telephone. The ruling was based on Sanchez's naturalisation papers obtained from the Philippine embassy in Washington, he said. The tribunal rejected Mr. Sanchez's contention that the naturalisation papers belonged to a namesake.

Norwegian plans to cross North Sea on water-skis

OSLO (R) — A Norwegian plans to cross the North Sea on water-skis and hopes to cover 600 kilometres in 18 hours. Trond Larsen, 36, will start near London's Tower Bridge on Aug. 14 — provided British authorities give their approval. The Norwegian News Agency (NTB) reported. He will be pulled by a 20-metre speedboat. A second boat will follow as escort on the journey to Esbjerg in Denmark. The ski instructor has also asked for permission to follow the ferry Dana Engla on its way from Harwich to Esbjerg because the vessel could provide shelter from strong winds. The captain has not yet given his go-ahead. Mr. Larsen, who lives in Denmark, already holds a water-ski record for 1,962 kilometres in 32 hours in coastal waters.

One-headed Siamese twin born in China

PEKING (AFP) — A young Chinese woman has given birth to a one-headed Siamese twin in Chongqing, in southwestern China's Sichuan province, the Liberation Daily reported. The baby was born with four arms and four legs, but only one pair was fully formed, the newspaper said. It was joined at the abdomen and had both female and male sexual organs.

Poll: Israelis back attacks on Lebanon

TEL AVIV (R) — Ninety-three per cent of Israelis interviewed for a newspaper poll published Friday said they believed Israel had to carry out a military campaign in Lebanon now six days old.

The Dahaf Institute survey of 523 Jewish adults for the Yedioth Ahrenoth newspaper showed an increase from 76 per cent who supported action in Lebanon before the army's "operation accountability" began Sunday.

The new poll was taken on Wednesday. The Dahaf Institute is an independent polling company.

Asked if they believed Israel should or should not carry out the action in Lebanon, 93 per cent said yes and seven per cent said no.

Asked if they believed the operation was carried out in the proper dimensions, 62 per cent said yes. Twenty-seven per cent said it should be expanded, seven per cent said it should be reduced and four per cent had no response.

Israeli aircraft, tanks, boats and artillery maintained a relentless bombardment of South Lebanon for a sixth straight day on Friday in a bid to crush resistance fighters.

But the guerrillas, who vowed to keep on fighting to purge South Lebanon of Israeli occupation, unleashed fresh salvos of Katyusha rockets into the Jewish state and its self-styled "security zone."

Border town Israelis, who had cheered the Jewish state's drive against the resistance forces in Lebanon, Thursday watched tanks roll over the border and said they did not want their soldiers dying for them in Lebanon.

Israel sent columns of armour over the border on Thursday, vowing there would be no stopping its air and artillery assault on Lebanon as long as guerrillas fired Katyusha rockets from northern Israel.

A guerrilla rocket salvo killed two people in Kiryat Shmona on Sunday, the first day of Israel's attack. More than 200 rockets have been fired at Israel since then, but no more Israeli civilians have been killed.

Lebanese Americans urge U.S. mediation on Lebanon

WASHINGTON (USA) — As Israel continued its heavy artillery shelling in southern Lebanon, George Cody, executive director of the American Task Force for Lebanon (ATFL), called on the United States to negotiate an immediate ceasefire in the region.

"We strongly urge the United States use its good offices to negotiate an immediate cessation of Israeli hostilities in Lebanon, and urge Syria and Lebanon to exert influence on Hizbollah and Palestinian factions to adhere to a ceasefire," Mr. Cody said during a Thursday news conference here.

He called on Secretary of State Warren Christopher to visit Lebanon and intervene in the situation during his upcoming trip to the Middle East.

Saying ATFL members "deplore the violence that's taking place in Lebanon," Mr. Cody warned that "the Israeli attacks on innocent civilians are causing death and destruction throughout the country," and this action cannot be allowed to continue.

Mr. Cody that "responsibility for security in Lebanon rests with the Lebanese army, and not with Israel," and that "we need to support the national institutions in that country" and permit Lebanon "to maintain its own sovereignty... and its own territorial integrity."

He underlined that "the United States voted for U.N. Security Council Resolution 425," and that now Security Council members "have a special obligation to implement that mandate."

The resolution, passed in March 1978, calls for "strict respect for the territorial integrity, sovereignty and political inde-

pendence on Lebanon" and calls on Israel to "immediately cease its military action against Lebanese territorial integrity and withdraw forthwith its forces from all Lebanese territory..."

"We don't need any more resolutions. We need to enforce the resolution that's already in place," Mr. Cody said of Resolution 425.

Mr. Cody told reporters that ATFL believes "it may be time to de-link the resolution of the Israeli occupation of southern Lebanon and the security of Israel's northern border from progress in the general Arab-Israeli conflict."

Claiming to be "more disappointed than surprised" at the events unfolding in Lebanon, Mr. Cody blamed "frustration on all sides" for the continued stalemate in the Middle East peace talks.

He said that Lebanon has endured many years of "civil war, turbulence and turmoil, and is on the road to reconstruction and reconciliation. And then something like this happens. For the international community not to respond, is obviously disappointing."

"Any effort," he continued, "any kind of condemnation — preferably in the United Nations, to come through international forums," would now be appreciated, he said.

He said he fears that if the situation is not reversed, the Lebanese people will only see "more suffering, more destruction. The United States has to intervene. It's committed to being a full partner in the process. And that doesn't mean a full partner only when things are going well."

NEWS IN BRIEF

India can run atomic plant without French fuel

NEW DELHI (R) — Indian scientists have developed a nuclear fuel to run an atomic power plant facing closure after France refused to continue uranium supplies, a senior minister says. Minister Bhuvash Chaturvedi, a minister attached to the prime minister's office, told deputies in the upper house of parliament that mixed uranium and plutonium fuel would replace low enriched uranium imported from France to run the Tarapur atomic power station, in western Maharashtra state. France announced earlier this month that it would not renew a 10-year-old contract to supply fuel which ends in October unless India accepts international atomic energy safeguards. Mr. Chaturvedi said India would not allow international scrutiny of its four atomic power stations.

Iran to fire un-Islamic dress women

TEHRAN (R) — The head of Iran's judiciary urged government officials Friday to fire women staff who flouted the Islamic dress code at work. "Ministers, directors and head of government offices are duty-bound to ensure that ladies working for them keep an Islamic appearance," Ayatollah Mohammad Yazdi said in a mass prayer sermon broadcast on Tehran Radio. "Women can work, but provided that they abide by Islamic norms. Officials must treat this seriously. If a lady cannot adapt herself a decade after the revolution, she can go and be replaced by another," he said. Ayatollah Yazdi, referring to an anti-vice crackdown launched last month, said it was wrong to try to enforce the dress code in the streets when it was ignored in government offices. Iran's Islamic laws set up to 74 lashes for women who appear in public without "hejab."

Indian elections now will be a stalemate

NEW DELHI (R) — A new Indian opinion poll shows no party would emerge with a clear majority if general elections were held now, the Press Trust of India (PTI) reported. The report came a day after the Congress Party administration of Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao narrowly won by 265 votes to 251 a no-confidence resolution supported by an array of opposition parties. The poll, to be published in the forthcoming issue of India Today magazine, showed the strength of the Congress Party dropping to 198 seats from its current 251. PTI said. The gains would be shared by the right-wing Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and a coalition of leftist and centrist parties, which would win 166 and 153 seats respectively, the poll said.

Idi Amin congratulates Baganda prince

KAMPALA (AFP) — Former Ugandan dictator Idi Amin has congratulated Prince Ronald Mutebi, the heir apparent of the Baganda kingdom who will assume the throne on Saturday. In 1966, Mr. Amin, then commander of the Ugandan army, led the soldiers who stormed Kabaka (king) Mutesa II's palace where former President Milton Obote ordered troops to depose the king for refusing to acknowledge central government authority. Mr. Amin's greetings to Prince Mutebi were delivered on Thursday by British journalist Tom Stacy who met Mr. Amin in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, where the former dictator lives in exile. Mr. Amin overthrew Mr. Obote in 1971 and unleashed a nine-year reign of terror until Tanzanian troops intervened and ousted him in 1979. "I have no problem with the kingship. I was a friend of the heir apparent," Mr. Amin said in the message.

Time ordered to pay damages to Papandreou

LONDON (AFP) — A court here has ordered the U.S. news magazine Time International to pay damages to former Greek Prime Minister Andreas Papandreou, a judicial official said. The court upheld an allegation that an article which appeared in the magazine in March 1989 implied that Mr. Papandreou was involved in the Koskotas financial scandal, which prompted the fall of the Greek Socialist government in June 1989. The amount of the damages and interest was not released. Mr. Papandreou, leader of the opposition Greek Socialist Party (Pasok), took legal action in Britain over the article, which he said was defamatory.

Xenophobic violence soars in Germany

WIESBADEN (AFP) — Attacks against foreigners have more than doubled to 3,365 in the first half of 1993 from 1,443 in the same period last year, police announced. In June, the month after five Turks died in an arson attack at Solingen, West Germany, more than 1,300 arson attacks, assaults and attacks on homes accommodating asylum seekers were registered, up from 400 in May, the Federal office of criminal investigation (BKA) said. Since the start of the year six immigrants were killed by suspected neo-Nazis and 321 people were injured in racist attacks. In the same period 195 arson attacks were carried out, against 596 in all of 1992. Last year 11 Germans and six foreigners died and 596 were wounded in racist violence, the BKA said.

King calls for end to Israeli actions

(Continued from page 1)

Commenting the democratisation process in Jordan, the French premier also expressed France's understanding of the challenges facing Jordan and voiced his country's keenness to enhancing Jordanian-French relations in all fields of cooperation.

Discussions between King Hussein and Mr. Balladur also centred on the peace process and dangers inherent in Israel's escalation of the situation in South Lebanon on the peace process.

During the King's meeting with Mr. Mitterrand at the Elysees Palace Thursday, the two leaders exchanged "lateral relations" and discussed a variety of regional and international issues at the

forefront of which were the process and the situations in Lebanon and Bosnia.

Mr. Mitterrand praised Jordan's democratisation process and the country's role in promoting regional stability and security, a press release from the Royal Palace said.

Attending the meetings with the prime minister and the foreign minister from the Jordanian side were Chief of the Royal Court Khaled Karaki, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Talal Al Hassan, Chief of Royal Protocol Mohammad Adwan, and Jordan's Ambassador to Paris Mu'tasem Bilbeisi. Attending from the French side were French Ambassador to Amman Denis Bouchard and other French government officials.

Following the Elysees Palace meeting, King Hussein told reporters his meeting with the French president was a good chance to discuss with him many issues.

He said Jordan's position on the peace process was clear, and it is based on encouraging its continuation "because it is the only available choice. I wish all in this world would support the continuation of the peace process to reach the hoped-for goal, which is to present to the coming generations a better life and an acceptable solution that they would accept, protect and defend."

He expressed hope that the problem of Iraq would be solved, saying this means to him that Iraq's territorial integrity would be protected and that it would have the chance to achieve national reconciliation, democracy, political pluralism and respect for human rights.

Arabs call for Security Council action

(Continued from page 1)

legations from Israel, Syria, Jordan, Lebanon and the Palestinians.

Mr. Bouez told reporters in Damascus that "Lebanon does not accept the principle of negotiating under the gun."

He said Lebanon saw no sense in continuing the peace process while Israeli attacks continued, a sentiment echoed by Arab League Secretary-General Esmat Abdul Meguid.

"How can peace be achieved if Israeli military operations continue in Lebanon?" Dr. Abdul Meguid said.

There was intensive diplomatic activity in advance of the Arab League meeting.

Among those in Damascus was Iranian Foreign Minister Ali

Akbar Velayati, who arrived unexpectedly Thursday to meet with Syrian President Hafez Al Assad.

Iran is the main sponsor of Hizbollah, the militia that Israel has targeted in its offensive.

Mr. Velayati also met with Hizbollah Secretary-General Sheikh Hassan Nasrallah, but no details of the meetings were given.

An Iranian embassy source said discussion focused on "ways of supporting Lebanese resistance and Lebanese people in the face of (Israeli) aggression."

Iran's official Islamic Republic News Agency, monitored in Cyprus, quoted Mr. Velayati as condemning the Israeli offensive as "a blatant breach of international law" and offering continued assistance to militias resisting the Jewish state.

No response to Hizbollah offer

(Continued from page 1)

Lebanon stops the rocketing Israel will end the operation.

"Israel believes that Syria wishes to stop the fighting and has the power to do so," he added.

With international calls increasing for a halt to the battle, official sources said a majority of ministers favoured a ceasefire.

But ministers left the meeting without making any comment and there was no communiqué.

In a statement issued in Beirut, Hizbollah Secretary-General Sheikh Hassan Nasrallah for the first time publicly acknowledged that his guerrillas were firing the rockets on Israel and its self-styled "security zone" in South Lebanon.

"We announce... that halting rocket attacks on settlements in occupied northern Palestine cannot be achieved but with the complete and permanent halt of aggression against villages and civilians... and the stopping of Israeli attacks from air, land and sea on all Lebanese territories," Sheikh Nasrallah said.

Christopher said to delay trip by 2 days

(Continued from page 1)

American administration will work with all its capacities to stop the aggressions."

Mr. Arafat said the PLO would wait to examine proposals by Mr. Christopher.

Mr. Christopher's arrival in the region will be preceded by a message carefully drawn up in Washington. From the start of the Israeli offensive, the U.S. government has placed the crisis within the context of the peace process, giving it broader dimensions than a simple reprisal for the killing of seven soldiers in southern Lebanon.

In fact, if it is an act of simple vengeance, the operation appears to have missed its objective, since the Israeli bombardments have failed to silence Hizbollah rockets, and has been counter-productive, since the Jewish state now stands accused of having killed Lebanese civilians and provoking an exodus of more than 500,000 civilians.

The outbreak of violence, far from underscoring the fruitlessness of the peace talks, illustrates how crucial to the region's stability it is to keep the process on track, in the U.S. view.

Some analysts believe Washington is counting on the Israeli offensive against Hizbollah to weaken the pro-Iranian Muslim fundamentalists, thereby removing an obstacle to the 21-month-old peace process.

"What more demonstration of what the area is going to look like if there is no peace than the situation in south Lebanon created by the Hizbollah today," said Middle East expert Jamil Mroue, former editor of the Arab daily Al Hayat.

The State Department is trying to avoid speculation by insisting that Mr. Christopher's decision to go to the Middle East was not the result of the fighting that has flared for a week along the Israeli-Lebanese border.

Israel said Thursday it was ready to halt the onslaught on Lebanon if the United States guaranteed Hizbollah guerrillas would stop firing Katyusha rockets at its northern towns.

Oded Ben-Ami, a senior aide to Prime Minister and Defence Minister Yitzhak Rabin, told Reuters Washington was actively trying to arrange a ceasefire.